21st Annual

Ohio Valley Athletic Conference

Hall of Fame

Induction Ceremony

Saturday, August 16, 2025

WesBanco Arena, Wheeling WV


Dirk DeCoy


Joe Dunlevy


Jeff Harrison


Doug Huff


'Bubba' Kapral


Bob Koch


Kelly Rine


Barbara Sleek


Seth Staskey


Scott Nolte


Don Clegg


Sonya Fedorko

OVAC Hall of Fame Selection Committee

Dirk DeCoy.....OVAC Executive Director
Joe Dunlevy.....Athletic Director/Indian Creek High School
Jeff Harrison.....Retired/Former Sports Editor/The Daily Jeffersonian
Doug Huff.....Retired/Sports Editor, The Intelligencer
Robert 'Bubba' Kapral.....Retired/Sports Editor, The Times Leader
Bob Koch.....Former OVAC Football All-Star Game Director
Kelly Rine.....Retired Athletic Director/St. Clairsville High School
Barbara Sleek.....OVAC Assistant Executive Director
Seth Staskey.....Athletic Director/Wheeling Central Catholic High School
Scott Nolte.....SID-West Liberty University/Former Sports Director-WTRF-TV7
Don Clegg.....Retired/Sports Editor, The Intelligencer/News Register
Sonya Fedorko.....Incoming OVAC HOF Chairman

OVAC Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony

Saturday, August 16, 2025

Welcome.....Dirk DeCoy, OVAC Executive Director
Invocation.....Dr. Vince Monseau
Dinner.....5:30 p.m.
Remarks/Introductions.....Dirk DeCoy, OVAC Executive Director
Master of Ceremonies.....John Sorrenti, Former Sports Director of WEIR Radio

Legends of the OVAC.....Jim Fryfogle, Larry Handschumacher, Paul Jackson, John Kelley, John Kouski

Magruder Distinguished Service Award.....I-470 Ballfields

2025 Hall of Fame Inductions

OVAC 'Family'
Steve Wojcik.....
OVAC 'Contributor'
Michael F. Del Re.....
Coaches
Ron Pobolish.....
Craig Schneid.....
Officials
Dan Delande.....
Joe Hissom.....
Athletes
Pat Korsnick.....
Gerald Schultze.....
Ernie Andria.....
Gary Fonner.....
Heath Haynes.....
Ann Osborne.....
Rich Mamie.....
Chet Pobolish.....
Clay Tucker.....
Derek Wolfe.....
Errin Baynes.....
AlexYoung.....

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Benediction.....Dr. Vince Monseau

2025-2026 OVAC EXECUTIVE BOARD, REPRESENTATIVES and COMMISSIONERS

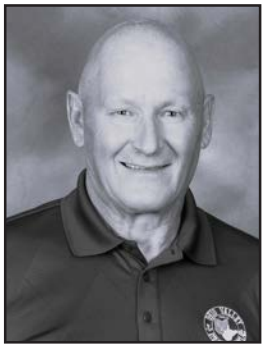
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Wayne Ogilbee
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Shawn Tomlan
Officiating
Bob Gabel
Standings
Barbara Sleek
Technology
Nick Arnold
Media
Zac Schnegg
Football All-Star Game
Corey Murphy

Congratulations to all of the current and past Hall of Fame inductees!

OVAC HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2025

Steve Wojcik



Steve Wojcik

Steve Wojcik (Wheeling Central Catholic High School, Class of 1969) - When you've been around the sport of baseball as a player, coach and commissioner for more than six decades, it's likely that your resume will be impressive and that's certainly the case with Wojcik.

In addition to being a standout on the diamond in high school and college with a four-year stint in the minor leagues and a lengthy resume in coaching, Wojcik served the conference for the better part of four decades, first as a member of the OVAC Baseball Committee from 1980-1998 and as the OVAC Baseball Commissioner from 2002-2017.

Known for running the sport with an "iron fist" during his tenure, "Woj" coordinated many aspects including the playoffs, all-star game and all-conference selections. He was also among those responsible for the OVAC Baseball College Showcase which took place for several years at the I-470 Complex in Elm Grove, W. Va.

He began playing the game he loves as an eight-year old and blossomed into a talented player at Wheeling Central where he earned three letters as a left-handed pitcher and first baseman. Wojcik posted a three-year record of 22-6 on the mound, including 4-2 as a sophomore, 8-3 as a junior and 10-1 as a senior. He also batted .390 as a senior and was named first team All-West Virginia (one class), co-captain of the All-Valley squad and to the All-West Virginia Catholic Tournament Team. The Maroon Knights won two W. Va. Catholic State Championships during his three seasons.

Wojcik took his talents to the collegiate level where, as freshman at Davis & Elkins, he went 7-2 and earned all-conference honorable mention. He transferred to West Liberty State College and after sitting out a year, he sparkled for three seasons with a 30-6 career pitching record. That included a 7-0 record as a sophomore, gaining all-WVIAC honors; 8-1 as a junior, repeating as an all-conference selection and helping the Hilltoppers win the WVIAC Championship; and 8-3 as a senior with an overall ERA of 1.00 which ranked sixth nationally in the NAIA. He led WLSC to another conference title and an NAIA Regional berth and was the WVIAC "Pitcher of the Year and an honorable mention NAIA All-American. He was a West Liberty Hall of Fame selection in 1997.

Wojcik was signed as a free agent by the New York Mets in 1974 and spent four seasons in the minor leagues (Class A and AA), posting a combined 27-22 record with a 3.74 ERA

He joined the coaching ranks in 1980 as the head coach at Bridgeport High, serving in that role until 1996. He then spent two seasons as the pitching coach at Wheeling Park (1997-98), pitching coach at West Liberty (1999-2006) and finally returning to Bridgeport for three more seasons (2007-09).

Michael F. Del Re



Michael F. Del Re

Michael F. Del Re (Moundsville High School, Class of 1965) – His contributions to Ohio Valley Athletic Conference in girls' basketball go beyond court success. Del Re was also actively involved in establishing the first OVAC Girls Basketball Championships in 1976 while serving as a member of the OVAC Girls Basketball Committee.

Del Re not only started the girls' hoop program at Madonna High School in 1973, he led the Lady Blue Dons to the top of the mountain in 1978 when the Lady Blue Dons captured the West Virginia Class AA State Championship with a spotless 25-0 record, defeating University High by a 65-55 score in the title contest. The team averaged an impressive 85 points per game in the era before the three-point goal was established, and the state championship marked the first-ever (Ohio or West Virginia) for an OVAC team in girls' hoops and the first WVSSAC championship for Madonna in any sport.

Madonna captured OVAC titles under Del Re in 1977, 1978 and 1979. He coached in the OVAC Samuel A. Mumley All-Star Basketball Game twice (1978, 2002).

He served two years as the head women's basketball coach at the College of Steubenville (now Franciscan University) before returning to Madonna in 2002, leading the Blue Dons to the W. Va. Class A State Semifinals. He finished with a final record of 131-36 as head coach of the Blue Dons.

Del Re also has been involved in athletics in a variety of other roles - starting the volleyball program at Madonna, coaching tennis at Weir, serving as a girls' basketball assistant for five years at Madonna and as finally as the Director of Athletics at Weir for six years and, although "retiring" in 2017, he's still heavily involved in the Red Riders' athletic program. For his contributions as well as coaching success, Del Re received the Rich Saffield Girls Coach Award at the OVAC Samuel A. Mumley Basketball Classic in 2021.

He earned his bachelor's in education from West Liberty State College (1969) and his master's in education from West Virginia University (1973).

Craig Schneid



Craig Schneid

Craig Schneid (St. John Central High School, Class of 1973). He enjoyed a tremendous career as a boys' track coach that spanned nearly four decades, including coaching teams to 10 state championships – tied for the most in the history of West Virginia boys' track with Russ Parsons (Stonewall Jackson/Parkersburg).

Schneid-coached teams won nine state titles at Magnolia in Class A-AA (1991, '92, '93, '95, '96, '99, 2000, '01, '02) and one at Wheeling Central in Class A (2008). He guided the Maroon Knights for five years before stepping back to an assistant's role before finally calling it a career in 2019.

He also had three state runner-up teams and led Magnolia to three OVAC Class 3A championships (1995, '96 and '97).

During his career, Schneid coached 42 individual and 28 relay state champions; eight high point scorers at the state meet and eight state meet record-holders. His athletes won every event at the state meet at some point except the pole vault.

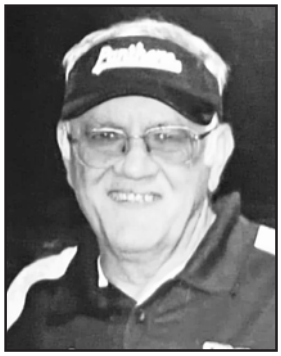
Schneid was selected West Virginia Track Coach of the Year five times; Ohio Valley Track Coach of the Year four times; the OVAC All-Sport Coach of the Year in 2002; the Dapper Dan Co-Man of the Year in 2002 along with another OVAC Hall of Famer – Oak Glen wrestling coach Larry Shaw; a finalist for the West Virginia All-Sport Coach of the Year in 1996 and 2002; and he was inducted into the West Virginia Schools Athletic Hall of Fame in 2002.

In addition to coaching track, Schneid was also an assistant football coach for two years and an assistant wrestling coach for one year at Magnolia and one year as golf coach at Paden City.

The St. John Central product received his bachelor's degree from Wet Liberty State College (1977) and his master's degree from West Virginia University.

OVAC HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2025

Ron Pobolish



Ron Pobolish

Ron Pobolish (Dillonvale High School, Class of 1966). This legendary football coach put together a 144-102-1 record over 24 seasons as a head coach at several area schools with a combined five OHSAA playoff appearances, four OVAC championships and three unbeaten teams.

After two years as an assistant at Martins Ferry after college, Pobolish began his head coaching career at Cadiz High (1973-76, 29-10-1 record), including 9-0-1 and 9-1 seasons in his final two years and an OVAC Class 2A championship in 1975. He then coached at John Marshall for three years (1977-79, 9-21 record).

Following a seven-year break, he returned to the sidelines at Buckeye South for two years (1986-87, 9-11 record) and two years at Buckeye SouthWest (1988-89, 14-6 record).

Then, after the final district consolidation, he guided Buckeye Local for six seasons (1990-95, 53-13 record), including the memorable 1994 campaign when the Panthers reached the OHSAA Division II State Championship game, where they dropped a 17-6 decision to Chardon to finish as the runner-up with a sparkling 13-1 record. To get to the title game, Buckeye Local defeated Uniontown Lake (25-7), Columbus Bishop Watterson (26-7) and Piqua (21-14).

After a second seven-year hiatus from the prep ranks which included a couple of years as an assistant at West Liberty State College, he took the reins at Harrison Central for two years (2003-04, 9-11 record), helping a struggling program get untracked.

Finally, he returned to Buckeye Local for a second stint, this time for five years (2005-09, 21-27), reaching the playoffs in 2008 and '09 before retiring for good.

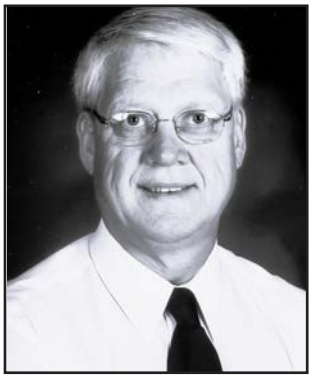
Under Pobolish, the Panthers won three OVAC Class 4A championships (1991, 1994 and 2009), five River Valley League titles and one Buckeye 8 crown. He coached in the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game four times (1976, 1978, 1988 and 2010).

A three-time Eastern District 'Coach of the Year' and the Ohio Valley Football Coach of the Year in 1975, he was previously inducted into the Ohio Valley Football Coaches Hall of Fame (2000) and the Buckeye Local Wall of Honor (2024).

As an athlete, Pobolish was a three-sport standout at Dillonvale High School (football, baseball, basketball), earning third team All-Ohio Class A honors in football and all-Eastern Ohio in football and basketball. He went on to be a three-year football starter at West Virginia University – one year at running back and two years as a defensive back. He was also the starting second baseman on the Mountaineers' baseball team as a sophomore.

Pobolish passed away in 2024 at the age of 76.

Dan Delande



Dan Delande

Dan Delande (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1965). Delande was a long-time official in two sports – as a basketball referee for 22 years and as a softball umpire for 27 years with games in the OVAC, Inter-Valley Conference, Pioneer Valley Conference and Federal League as well as 12 years umpiring Division II and III college contests.

He worked sectional, district, regional and state level tournaments in both Ohio and West Virginia including 15 Ohio regionals, nine Ohio state tournaments, four West Virginia state softball finals and one West Virginia state basketball final.

Delande served as an officer and executive committee member of the Ohio Valley Board of Softball Umpires, was an officials' assigner and a member of the OVAC All-Star Basketball Committee.

He was inducted into the Ohio High School Athletic Association Officials Hall of Fame in 2025.

Delande also served as director of the adult softball league and umpire assigner for the Wheeling Recreation Department and was co-director of the Wheeling Basketball Shootout for many years.

Delande played baseball and basketball at Bridgeport, earning All-Ohio recognition as a first baseman as a senior, and later became an avid softball player and golfer. He was inducted into the Bridgeport Hall of Fame in 2024.

He received his bachelor's degree from Ohio University in 1971 and his master's degree from the University of Dayton in 1977. He served as a teacher and principal at Bridgeport, Martins Ferry and St. Joseph's Catholic School and also as a substitute teacher at Shadyside after he retired.

Delande, who served in the U.S. Navy, passed away in 2024 at age 77.

Joe Hissom



Joe Hissom

Joe Hissom (Barnesville High School, Class of 1975). A registered basketball official for 39 years, Hissom hung up his whistle following the 2020-2021 season.

During his career, he worked six OHSAA State Tournament games; 42 regional tournament games; 54 district championship games; 25 OVAC Basketball Tournament championship games and nine Buckeye 8 Tournament title games.

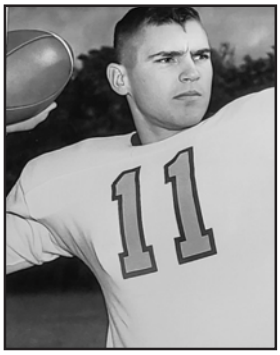
Hissom officiated games in the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference, East Central Ohio League, Muskingum Valley League, Inter-Valley Conference, Buckeye 8 Athletic League and Pioneer Valley Conference and countless non-conference games throughout the East District during his career.

He was named District 5 Basketball Coaches Association Official of the Year three times (2002, 2003, 2007); the District 12 Basketball Coaches Association Official of the Year in 2002; the Ohio Valley Board Official of the Year (04); and the OVAC Robert Dawson Officials Award in 2022.

Hissom, whose son Matt carries on the family tradition of officiating, was a member of the Ohio Valley Board of Basketball Officials and the East Central Ohio Board of Basketball Officials.

OVAC HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2025

Pat Korsnick



Pat Korsnick

Pat Korsnick (Wheeling Central High School, Class of 1968). One of the most honored football/baseball athletes in Maroon Knight history, the 5-foot-10, 180-pounder earned a Division I football scholarship and played both football and baseball in college after being drafted for pro baseball out of high school.

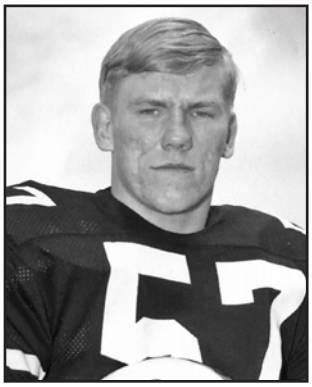
The three-year regular quarterback-defensive back-punter-placekicker led Central to records of 9-0-1, 8-2-1 and the school's first perfect season (10-0) as a senior. He earned every available honor his final year — 1st team All-State, repeat 1st team "Big School" All-Valley and selected captain, and All-OVAC Class AAA for an OVAC championship-winning team. The unbeaten Knights were acclaimed state Catholic Schools champion for a third straight year without a playoff because of a dominant, spotless season (8 shutouts, outscoring its opponents by 285-21). In his junior season, Central defeated Madonna, 46-6, in the state Catholic title game.

As a senior, he completed 64 passes for 1,096 yards and 8 TDs and rushed 78 times for 403 yards and 20 TDs. He also kicked 11 PATs. As a junior, he passed for 790 yards and 11 TDs with no interceptions and rushed 66 times for 473 yards. In the title game vs. Madonna, he was 8-for-8 passing for 165 yards and two TDs.

In baseball, Korsnick earned 1st team, one class All-State honors both as a junior and senior outfielder. He batted .480 as a junior and .458 as a senior. He was selected co-captain of the 1st All-Valley, all-class selections as a senior.

Korsnick was drafted by the Cincinnati Reds after his senior season but instead opted for a football scholarship to Purdue University. He attended Purdue for a year before transferring to North Carolina State where he played football for three years as a quarterback-punter and baseball as an outfielder.

Gerald Schultze



Gerald Schultze

Gerald Schultze (Wheeling High School, Class of 1969). He was an All-Valley and All-State player in three sports and became an All-American football center at West Virginia University.

At Wheeling High, he was a 6-foot, 200-pound football center-linebacker, a heavyweight wrestler and track shot-putter.

In football, as a senior, he earned 1st Team All-Valley "Big School" center, 1st Team All-OVAC Class AAA, and 2nd Team All-State Class AAA.

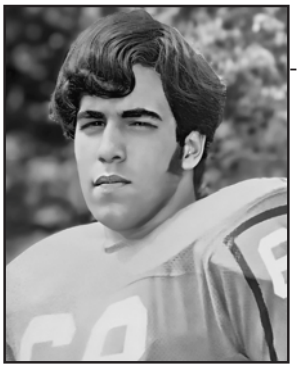
In wrestling, the Wildcats won the W.Va. one-class state title his senior year as he placed fourth in the heavyweight division after being runner-up in the OVAC Tournament.

In track, his best shot put was 54-5 3/4 to win the Brooke Relays, just shy of the Ohio Valley record of 55-4. He placed second in the OVAC meet and the state Class AAA meet with a 52-2 toss. He earned All-Valley honors in track.

Schultze received a football grant-in-aid to West Virginia University. After starting at linebacker on the WVU freshman team (frosh weren't eligible for varsity at the time), he was switched to center and lettered three years – the last two as a starter – for the Mountaineers.

He was selected 3rd Team All-American as a senior center by The Associated Press and also was awarded the Meisel Award for top academic WVU senior football player. He played on three teams coached by College Football Hall of Famer Bobby Bowden with records of 8-3, 7-4 and 8-4.

Ernie Andria



Ernie Andria

Ernie Andria (Wintersville High School, Class of 1975). Andria was a three-sport standout - wrestling, track and football for the Golden Warriors. Not only did he earn letters in each sport all three years, but he also was named captain for each as a senior.

At 6-3, 250 pounds, he actually ran speed events in track. In fact, he participated in the 220 and 440 relay and even anchored the 880 relay team in invitational meets.

Wrestling was another successful endeavor as he competed as a heavyweight and won numerous titles. His senior record was 26-4 and included a fourth place finish in the OVAC Wrestling Tournament. Although sustaining an injury in his junior season, he accumulated more than 50 varsity wins at WHS.

Football was his meal ticket, however, as he excelled for OVAC Hall of Fame Coach Robert Kettlewell at Wintersville.

Andria was a dominant interior lineman and a starter from day one of his sophomore season. He really entered the big stage in his junior season, however. In a game against Dayton Patterson, he dominated Ohio State senior recruit and future All-American lineman and NFL player Chris Ward, and this performance caused a recruiting boom for Andria's services.

His Golden Warrior accomplishments and awards are staggering.

They include: 1974 Ohio Class AAA All-State 1st Team offensive guard selection; 1974 Associated Press All-Eastern District Class AAA 1st Team/Lineman of the Year; 1974 All-OVAC 1st Team; 1974 All-Valley 1st Team/Co-Captain; 1974 High School All-American named by Scholastic Magazine -The Schoolboy Top 100 Players; 1975 OVAC All-Star Game Selection/Ohio Team Captain; 1975 Ohio North-South All-Star Game selection; 1975 Wintersville H.S. Top Athlete Award; 1975 Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan High School Special Honoree.

He had multiple Division I scholarship offers and picked The Ohio State University over WVU and others.

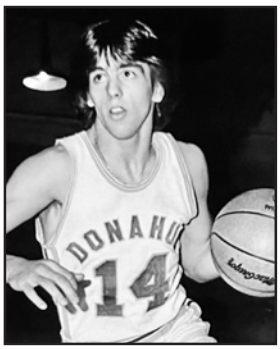
At Ohio State, he was a four-year letterman and a two-year starter at guard. As a senior, Andria earned second team UPI All-Big Ten honors while OSU went 11-0 in the 1979 regular season to win the Big Ten Conference and bowed to USC, 17-16, in the 1980 Rose Bowl.

Andria was part of an infamous play in OSU history as he was the messenger guard who brought in the final play that ended the career of Coach Woody Hayes. The play led to the altercation with Hayes hitting Clemson noseguard Charlie Bauman in the 1978 Gator Bowl.

Andria's fine college career enabled him to ink a free agent contract with the Houston Oilers. Unfortunately, an injury on the first day of training camp ended his professional hopes. He is now retired from the Worthington (Ohio) Public Schools.

OVAC HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2025

Gary Fonner



Gary Fonner

Gary Fonner (Bishop Donahue High School, Class of 1978). Fonnner was perhaps the most gifted and entertaining athlete to ever grace the halls of Bishop Donahue.

As a wide receiver/defensive back in football, Fonner earned All-OVAC first team honors and duplicated that feat with similar honors in baseball as a centerfielder/pitcher. He had speed and strength rarely seen in a player 5-11 and 160 pounds.

It was in basketball, however, that Fonner really turned heads.

Playing over the rim and often times on the edge of reality, Fonner scored 1,172 career points in two years, averaging 33.4 ppg as a senior, along with 13 rebounds, five assists and four steals. He scored 55 points in one game, still a Marshall County high school scoring record, and had 49 points in a memorable match against Sistersville at the Wheeling Civic Center, still the record for that building.

He was named All-OVAC captain, All-Valley 'Small School' captain, and first-team All-West Virginia Class A captain. He was also named the OVAC Athlete of the Year in 1978.

Moreover, Fonner was selected by The Intelligencer as one of the OVAC's Top 100 Athletes of the 20th Century, the only Bishop Donahue athlete selected. He earned a basketball scholarship to Wheeling Jesuit University.

Fonner is also an accomplished golfer. He has won several local amateur golf tournaments.

Heath Haynes



Heath Haynes

Heath Haynes (The Linsly School, Class of 1987). Haynes enjoyed a remarkable pitching career both on the high school and collegiate levels, including scripting a brilliant resume with the Cadets that included a 26-4 career pitching record with 287 strikeouts.

As a junior, Haynes was named Class A All-State by the West Virginia Sports Writers. He went 12-1 for the Cadets that spring with a miniscule ERA of 1.55. He hurled a pair of no-hitters, including one in an OVAC championship game, and struck out 150 batters while fanning at least 10 hitters in every game he pitched. He was subsequently selected as the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Player of the Year and an All-Valley co-captain.

His impressive mound craftsmanship didn't end that spring. Haynes was named MVP of the West Virginia American Legion State Tournament while helping Wheeling Post 1 capture the state title that summer with an 8-2 mound mark.

Haynes was every bit as impressive during his senior campaign at Linsly when the Cadets won a third straight OVAC championship behind Haynes' two-hitter in the title contest. He was named Class A All-State captain by the WV Sports Writers after going a sparkling 9-1 with a 1.59 E.R.A. and 133 Ks in 70 1/3 innings. Haynes was again named the OVAC Player of the Year along with being selected captain of the All-Valley team.

The talented right-hander was tabbed West Virginia Legion Player of the Year, posting a 15-0 record for Post 1.

After graduating from the Leatherwood-based school, Haynes took his immense mound package to Western Kentucky University where he was a four-year standout for the Hilltoppers. Haynes remains in the top 10 of numerous pitching categories at WKU. His career totals included: 74 appearances, 49 games started, 325 innings pitched, 24 wins, 253 strikeouts and 12 complete games. He was named first-team All-Sun Belt Conference as a senior after posting a 10-5 record with a 2.90 E.R.A.

After his stellar collegiate diamond career, Haynes signed as a free agent with the Montreal Expos in 1991. Haynes briefly appeared in the majors in 1994 for the Expos while also playing in the minor leagues for the Oakland A's, California Angels, Boston Red Sox, Colorado Rockies, Florida Marlins and Houston Astros. Haynes also played for the Valley Vipers of the Western Baseball League and the Wei Chuan Dragons of the Chinese Professional Baseball League.

Ann Osborne



Ann Osborne

Ann Osborne (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 1984). Osborne, a multi-talented guard, poured in a whopping 1,697 points during her four years at St. Clairsville, a mark that still stands as the school record today.

Osborne earned a host of accolades for her performance on the prep hardwood, including being named a four-time all-Ohio Valley Athletic Conference selection (second team as a freshman and first team the other three years). She was also a two-time first team All-Eastern District and All-District 12 selection.

At the state level, she received All-Ohio special mention as a junior and then was named second team All-Ohio as a senior after averaging 20.5 points per game.

A St. Clairsville Athletic Hall of Fame (2006) and District 12 Basketball Hall of Fame (2013) inductee, Osborne's talents also extended to the tennis court where she was a three-time OVAC champion in singles.

Osborne continued her superb hoop play at the collegiate level, becoming a four-year letterwinner at Ohio Wesleyan University.

At Ohio Wesleyan, Osborne was a four-time All-North Coast Athletic Conference pick in women's basketball. She set OWU's career assists record. A first-team All-NCAC selection as a senior, she ranked eighth in the league in scoring (13.8/game), fourth in assists (4.0/game) and fifth in free-throw percentage (.704).

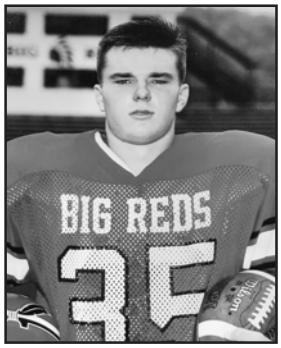
She finished her career as OWU's all-time leader in assists (402) and free throws (427) and ranked third on the career scoring (1398) and rebounding (518) lists.

Osborne also lettered three years in tennis and was a third-team GTE Academic All-America selection as a senior. She was inducted into the OWU Athletic Hall of Fame in 1993.

She spent 14 years in coaching at the college level, with stops at Fairfield (Conn.) and Marshall as an assistant; as head coach at Kenyon College; and as an assistant at Ohio Wesleyan and San Francisco State.

OVAC HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2025

Rich Mamie



Rich Mamie

Rich Mamie (Bellaire High School, Class of 1996). One of the all-time greats in the long and storied history of Bellaire High athletics, Mamie was a force to be reckoned with on the football field and baseball diamond during the mid-1990s.

A three-year football letterman and two-time All-Ohio Division IV, All-OVAC Class AAA and All-Valley 'Big School' honoree, Mamie excelled on both sides of the ball for some legendary Big Reds powerhouses. He helped lead Bellaire to three straight OVAC titles and a 30-5 record during his three varsity seasons, highlighted by the Big Reds' first-ever unbeaten (10-0) regular season as a senior in 1995. That 1995 team advanced all the way to the Ohio Division IV state championship game before dropping a heartbreaking 50-44 double-overtime decision to Versailles.

Mamie's name is all over the Big Reds' football record book. Offensively, he set a school record with 282 career points, scoring 36 touchdowns while averaging 6.3 yards a carry from his fullback spot. Defensively, Mamie is the school's all-time tackle leader with 515 career stops – over 100 more than any other Bellaire gridder! He also ranks No. 1 on the school's single-game (29) and single-season (196) tackle lists.

A multi-sport athlete, Mamie was also an outstanding pitcher and shortstop for the Big Reds' baseball team. He was a first-team All-OVAC Class AAA honoree as a junior and senior in addition to first-team All-Eastern District honors.

After graduating from Bellaire, Mamie took his talents to Walsh University in North Canton, Ohio where he earned a combined six letters in football and baseball. He played both sports in his first two seasons at Walsh before focusing on baseball for his last two years. He was a two-time All-Conference selection in the diamond sport, where he also served as the Cavaliers' team captain. Mamie was inducted to the Bellaire High School Athletic Wall of Fame in 2006.

Chet Pobolish



Chet Pobolish

Chet Pobolish (Buckeye Local High School, Class of 1995). Pobolish earned All-Ohio honors as a two-way standout while playing for his father, Ron Pobolish, at Buckeye Local High School before going on to enjoy an outstanding playing and coaching career at the collegiate level.

A fleet-footed running back and defensive back, Chet Pobolish capped off a stellar high school career in style by helping lead Buckeye Local to an undefeated regular season and deep post-season run as a senior in 1994.

After rolling to OVAC Class AAAA and River Valley League titles, the Panthers – ranked No. 4 in the state – began carving a path through the Ohio Division II state playoffs. Three big wins set up a meeting of the unbeaten between the Panthers and Chardon. Buckeye Local's dream season came up one win shy as Chardon muscled out a 17-6 win to end a great run. Pobolish swept nearly every post-season honor, earning All-Ohio Division II, All-Eastern District and All-OVAC Class AAAA honors for the second straight year and being selected as an offensive captain for the All-Valley team.

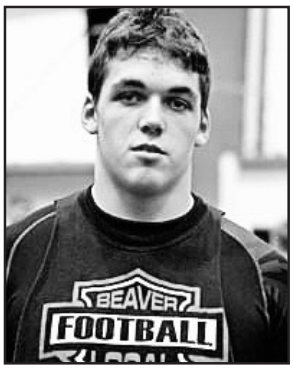
After graduating from Buckeye Local, Pobolish headed west to NCAA Division II Emporia State (Kan.). A 4-year letterman and 3-year captain, Pobolish was a 4-time All-MIAA selection and finished his career ranked among the school's Top 5 in receiving yards (2,595) and all-purpose yards (4,655).

Pobolish stayed at Emporia State as an assistant coach from 1999-2006. He moved to Delta State (Miss.) as an assistant in 2007 and helped lead the Statesmen to four Gulf South titles and NCAA playoff appearances in five seasons.

A successful 5-year run at Southeastern Louisiana followed with Pobolish serving as offensive coordinator and assistant head coach on back-to-back Southland Conference championship squads. He spent the 2017 season as offensive coordinator at Missouri Western State before a 4-year stint as head coach at Southwestern Oklahoma State.

He spent the 2022 season as assistant head coach and offensive coordinator at Reinhardt (Ga.) University, helping lead the Eagles to an 8-2 record, before leaving to accept the head coaching position at Arkansas City (Kan.) High School.

Derek Wolfe



Derek Wolfe

Derek Wolfe (Beaver Local High School, Class of 2008). This eventual Super Bowl champion defensive lineman was a multi-sport star for the Beavers during his prep career.

On the football field at Beaver, Wolfe caused all sorts of problems for opposing offenses from his defensive line position. During his senior season, he recorded 78 tackles and seven sacks en route to All-Ohio Division III, All-OVAC Class 4A and All-Eastern District Division III accolades. He finished his prep career with 205 tackles.

Wolfe was also dominant on the wrestling mat for the Beavers. He had a brilliant senior season, finishing with a 33-4 record. He placed fifth in both the OVAC Ron Mauck Wrestling Championships and the OHSAA Division II State Tournament.

Wolfe opted to pursue football at the collegiate level, and it was a decision that paid off.

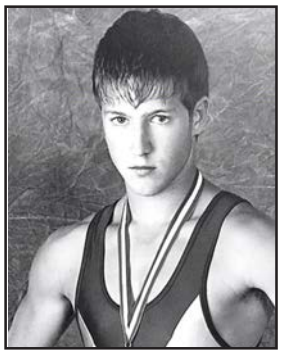
He was a four-year regular for the Cincinnati Bearcats. As a senior, he was named Big East Co-Defensive Player of the Year and was listed on an astounding five All-America teams. He ranked fifth in FBS with 1.65 tackles for loss per game. All told, he posted 21.5 tackles for loss and 9.5 sacks. In his career with the Bearcats, Wolfe logged 162 total tackles, 37 tackles for loss and 19.5 sacks.

Wolfe was drafted in the second round in 2012 with the 36th overall pick by the Denver Broncos. He played 10 seasons in the NFL, including eight with the Broncos and two with the Baltimore Ravens. He recorded 350 career tackles, 34 sacks, three fumble recoveries and an interception. He was a member of the Super Bowl 50 winning Broncos' team. Unfortunately, injuries forced his retirement in 2022.

Wolfe has been honored by the Lou Holtz Upper Ohio Valley Hall of Fame in 2016. He and former high school teammate Jamin Pastore donated $1M to Beaver Local High School for upgrades to the school's football stadium facilities.

OVAC HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2025

Clay Tucker



Clay Tucker

Clay Tucker (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 2005). The Purple Rider wrestling program has produced numerous standout performers over the course of time. Tucker is certainly among the best with a resume that includes basically everything an Ohio Valley prep wrestler can attain.

Tucker was a four-year letterman for the Purple Riders and finished his vaunted career with an impressive 169-10 career record. Tucker never had a season in which he won fewer than 38 matches. He set the school record for single season wins as a junior with 46. He broke onto the scene with a 42-win freshman campaign and followed that with 43 as a sophomore. At the time of his graduation, that was the school record for the most wins. He also established school records for technical falls in a career (47) and single season (18).

Tucker joined an illustrious company in the Ohio Valley wrestling world by winning four championships in the OVAC Tournament. He won the coveted Bierkortte Award, which is given to the OVAC Tournament's Most Outstanding Wrestler as a senior.

He was also a four-time All-Ohioan, including a state championship at 130 pounds in 2004. He was runner-up in 2003 at 125 pounds. Those trips to the title bouts were surrounded by a fourth-place finish as a freshman and a sixth-place effort as a senior. En route to the state tournament, Tucker also won four sectional and district championships.

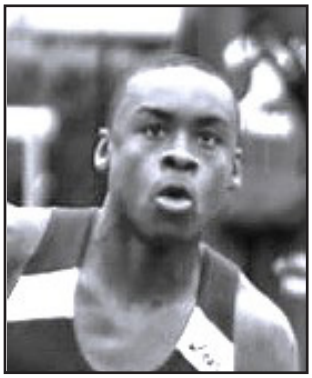
With his resume, accolades followed in bunches. Tucker competed in the Eastern Ohio All-Star Meet, earned all-OVAC four times and was the Wheeling News Register's Ohio Wrestler of the Year as a senior. After his senior season, he took part in the NHSCA Senior Nationals, finishing second at 140. By doing so, he became the first Purple Rider to earn All-American status.

Tucker also shined in football for the Purple Riders, earning three letters as a wide receiver and defensive back. He earned First Team All-OVAC as a senior with more than 500 yards receiving and five touchdowns. He was part of a Purple Rider squad which won the regional championship and played in the state semifinals. He played in the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game in 2005.

After graduation, Tucker continued his wrestling career at Ohio University, lettering four times and compiling a career record of 71-66. He was fourth and third in the Mid-American Conference Tournament during his career including a 25-14 record as a senior.

He entered the coaching ranks and served as head coach at Wheeling Park for three seasons from 2015-17. He had been an assistant for three seasons and then returned to the assistant's role after stepping down as the head coach.

Errin Baynes



Errin Baynes

Errin Baynes (Wheeling Park High School, Class of 2012). Whether it was on the soccer field, basketball court or track, this former Patriot shined.

It was in track and field, however, where Baynes made his biggest impact for the Patriots. A standout in the high jump, Baynes was just the third OVAC athlete to clear the coveted 7-foot barrier as a prep athlete.

His monumental jump occurred during his senior season at a meet in Mars, Pa. when he soared over 7-foot, one-quarter inch. He finished that season, as well as his junior campaign, undefeated in his specialty, consistently clearing 6-foot-8 and higher, which allowed him to win the W. Va. State Class AAA and OVAC Championships. He finished his senior season ranked second, nationally, in the high jump.

Actually, he was a multiple-time champion at both of those meets. He won three state championships in the high jump and the same number at the conference meet. He wasn't afraid to challenge himself as proven by the fact that he competed in the New Balance High School Nationals after his junior season, placing third with a 6-8 clearance.

Baynes also shined in the long jump. He had a personal-best mark of 22-ft-3 ½ and won the state championship in both 2011 and 2012.

Baynes shined on the soccer field for the Patriots. He was twice named First Team All-State and as a senior was named the state's midfielder of the year. He was also a three-time All-OVAC selection and conference player of the year as a senior. He captained the All-Valley team that season as well.

Those aforementioned jumping skills came in handy during the winter when Baynes was a standout on the basketball court. A three-year starter, Baynes helped lead Park to a pair of OVAC championships and multiple trips to the West Virginia State Tournament.

As a senior, Baynes averaged 15 points per game and handed out five assists per contest. He scored a career-high of 38 points in a game during his senior season.

After high school, Baynes elected to take his track and field talents to the University of Southern California. He competed for the Trojans for two seasons in the high jump before injuries derailed his career.

The OVAC Hall of Fame Committee is seeking nominations for future consideration for induction into the OVAC Hall of Fame

Individuals are selected in various categories
(Family, Contributor, Media, Coaches, Officials and Athletes)
To nominate an individual, please submit detailed biographical information
and, if possible, a photograph, to any OVAC Hall of Fame Committee member.
Information should focus heavily on high school-related accomplishments
(statistics, all-star honors, etc.), but college/professional information is also requested.

OVAC HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2025

Alex Young



Alex Young

Alex Young Indian Creek High School, Class of 2013). Earning All-Ohio acclaim in one sport is quite impressive. Doing it in four sports – in one school year – is simply off the chart.

That's exactly what this former Redskin athlete did as a senior when he earned the state of Ohio's top honor in football, basketball, baseball and track and field. Those honors put the finishing touches on one of the most brilliant careers of any male athlete in Indian Creek's history.

Young accumulated 12 letters during his prep career and while shining in multiple sports, it was on the baseball diamond where he left his biggest mark. During his career, Young hit .415, which ranks second in school history. He scored 96 runs, which is the most by any Redskin player. He finished with 100 hits, 78 singles, 11 triples (school record) and he swiped 62 bases (school record). He was twice named All-OVAC Class 5A in baseball and was All-Ohio as a senior. He also played in the Mizuno All-Ohio Series and OVAC All-Star Game.

As a basketball player, Young put up impressive numbers despite missing half of his junior season with an injury. He ranks 10th in school history in single-season scoring, third in single-season steals, 10th in career rebounds with 264 and fifth in career steals. He was All-OVAC Class 5A as a senior and junior and received second team All-Eastern District and honorable mention All-Ohio Division II as a senior.

On the football field, Young played early in his career at wide receiver before shifting to quarterback as a senior where he earned first team All-East District Division III and All-OVAC Class 5A and third team All-Ohio Division III honors. During his career, he scored 19 touchdowns, kicked 19 PATs and three field goals, and had a trio of two-point conversions. He scored TDs as a running back, receiver, kick returner, punt returner and defensive back. As a senior, he accounted for 192 of the Redskins' 376 points. Demonstrating his versatility, Young had a game as a senior in which he rushed and passed for more than 100 yards and also added more than 100 yards in the return game. He was All-OVAC Class 5A and All-Eastern District Division III and was third team All-Ohio Division III at quarterback.

Arguably Young's greatest athletic achievement came during a three-week stretch in late May of 2013. After the Redskins were eliminated from the baseball postseason, Young decided to join the track team. He proceeded to win the district (50.98) and regional (49.91) titles in the 400-meter dash and finished fifth in the Division II state meet, posting an impressive time of 49.65.

Young elected to pursue baseball at the collegiate level. He played two seasons at Sinclair Junior College in Dayton before transferring to Grand Valley State in Michigan for his final two seasons of eligibility.

The OVAC Hall of Fame Committee congratulates

J.B. Chambers I-470 Complex
as the Dennis Magruder Distinguished Service Award recipient for 2025



For significant contributions to the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference since it opened, the J.B. Chambers I-470 Complex in Elm Grove, West Virginia has been selected as the 2025 recipient of the Dennis Magruder Distinguished Service Award by the OVAC Hall of Fame Committee.

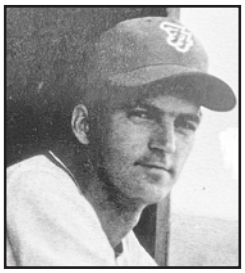
Thanks to the tireless work of those who make things run like clockwork at the facility, the ballfields are abuzz throughout the spring, summer and even into the fall. That includes countless OVAC softball and baseball tournament and all-star games as well as the OVAC Baseball College Showcase event, and it also serves as the home field for Wheeling Central Catholic baseball and softball contests. Throw in thousands of youth baseball and softball games and the six fields at the site, including a 'Challenger Field', have become a staple in the valley.

Past recipients of the OVAC's Distinguished Service Award include Denny Magruder (2010); Bob Robinson (2011); Carpenters Local #3 of Wheeling (2012); Judge Frank Fregiato (2013); WesBanco Arena Maintenance Staff (2014); Ohio University Eastern (2015); Oglebay Park (2016); Mickey Duffy (2017); Ron Miller (2018); Dave Schafer (2019); Ohio County Schools (2021); Brooke County Schools (2022); Todd Fullerton (2023), Tom Myers (2024).

LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2025



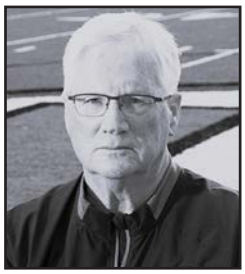
Jim Fryfogle



Larry Handschumacher



Paul Jackson



John Kelley



John Kouski

Legends of OVAC member schools honors those great athletes who played or coached in the Ohio Valley prior to the formation of the conference in 1943 or who played or coached after that date but before their school became a member of the conference.

Jim Fryfogle (Shenandoah High School, Class of 1969). The 5-foot-11, 175-pounder collected 11 varsity letters and all-star honors in football, basketball and baseball for the Zeps.

In football, the 3-year letterman and two-time team captain was an All-Pioneer Valley League defensive back as a junior and honored senior quarterback for a 7-3 record team. He also earned All-Southeastern Ohio honorable mention.

In basketball, the three-year regular guard helped the Zeps to a 17-1 regular season record, and 1902 overall, as a junior on the Mid-Ohio Valle y League championship team which won the Class A sectional title. As a senior, he was All-MOVL and All-Southeastern Ohio plus honorable mention All-Ohio Class A.

In baseball, the four-year letterman capped a stellar senior season with a 10-1 pitching record and batted .348 on a 12-5 record team which repeated as East Central Ohio League champ. He was All-ECOL.

He played baseball four seasons at Marietta College and was a member of four Ohio Athletic Conference title teams. He was inducted into the Shenandoah Athletic Hall of Fame in 2022.

Larry Handschumacher (Salem-Liberty High School, Class of 1963). Playing for a school that was later consolidated into Fort Frye, he excelled as a four-year letterman in basketball and baseball.

In basketball, he was the school's all-time leading scorer with 1,387 points after averaging 28.1 points a game as a junior and 27.6 points as a senior when he earned 2nd Team UPI All-Ohio Class A and honorable mention AP All-Ohio Class A. He was the Washington County Tournament MVP and leading scorer three straight years.

In baseball, he capped a four-year career by batting .536 as a senior. He then played baseball for four years at Ohio University under coach Bob Wren.

He was a teacher and head baseball coach and junior high and jayvee basketball coach at Fort Frye.

A 2017 inductee into the Mid-Ohio Valley Sports Hall of Fame, he also was also honored in 2011 by the Dugout Softball Hall of Fame.

Paul Jackson (Parkersburg South High School, Class of 1973). After serving as an aide to South wrestling coach and OVAC Legends honoree Rod Oldham, Jackson took the head coaching reins in 1990 and in two stints (1990-97 and 2007-12) he would become the winningest largest Class AAA coach in state history with 9 state championships. He coached 26 individual state champions, 130 state placers, and was honored 7 times as W. Va. Class AAA Wrestling Coach of the Year.

Overall, his dual meet record was 325-56, including 115 consecutive wins, plus 55 tournament titles. His 1995 Patriot team was ranked 20th nationally.

After South joined the OVAC, his teams won the conference crown in his final three seasons (2010-12) as the Class 5A and overall champion. He won OVAC dual meet crowns in 2009 and 2010.

Among other honors, Jackson was the state all-sports Coach of the Year in 2012 by the W.Va. Sports Writers Association -- only the second wrestling coach so honored. The other was National, state and OVAC Hall of Famer Larry Shaw of Oak Glen. He was a finalist three straight years (2010-12) for the all-sports Bill Van Horne/OVAC Coach of the Year; OVAC Wrestling Coach of the Year in 2010 and 2011; and selected National Wrestling Coach, Scholastic Division Coach of Year in 1996-97 and 2010-11.

In 2015, he received the "Lifetime Service to Wrestling Award" from the W.Va. Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame and also was inducted into the Mid-Ohio Valley Sports Hall of Fame. His alma mater awarded him the school Lifetime Achievement Award in 2022.

John Kelley (Oak Glen High School, Class of 1968). He retired in 2024 as the winningest football coach in Monongalia County history.

The former Oak Glen High athlete spent 49 years as a prep football coach including the last 41 years at University High School - -the final 37 years as head coach (1987-2023). His first team was in the state Class AA playoffs and, overall, he guided 23 teams to post-season playoffs with every team from 1998-2005 earning playoff berths.

Six teams advanced to state semifinals and the 1994 team was Class AAA runner-up to South Charleston. Three Hawk teams posted 10-0 unbeaten regular seasons. Overall, he won 254 games and had 28 winning seasons. Two of his teams won largest class OVAC titles.

He coached 44 1st Team All-State players and eight who won conference player of the year honors. Four players went on to an NFL experience highlighted by OVAC Hall of Fame Legends' honoree Rich Braham, currently a Hawk assistant coach, who was an All-American at West Virginia U. before playing 13 years with the Cincinnati Bengals. Kelley also coached another OVAC Legends' selection, Jedd Gyorko, who went on to baseball All-America honors at WVU and had a nine-year major league baseball career.

John Kouski (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1940). He was considered one of the finest all-round athletes in school history after being a rare four-year letterman in football and basketball and serving as team captain in both sports as a senior.

In football, he played a variety of positions -- passer, runner and kicker, while being a fullback, halfback and defensive standout. He represented the Bulldogs in the inaugural Ohio/West Virginia All-Star Football Game.

In basketball, he played both guard and center and was a key member of three Ohio state tournament teams coached by OVAC Legends' honoree Floyd Baker. All three teams during his freshman, sophomore and junior years were eliminated by the eventual state champion.

In 1939, the Bulldogs defeated Akron Buchtel in the state tourney as Kouski scored 15 points -- a high number in that era. Eventual champ Akron North ousted the Bulldogs in the quarterfinals.

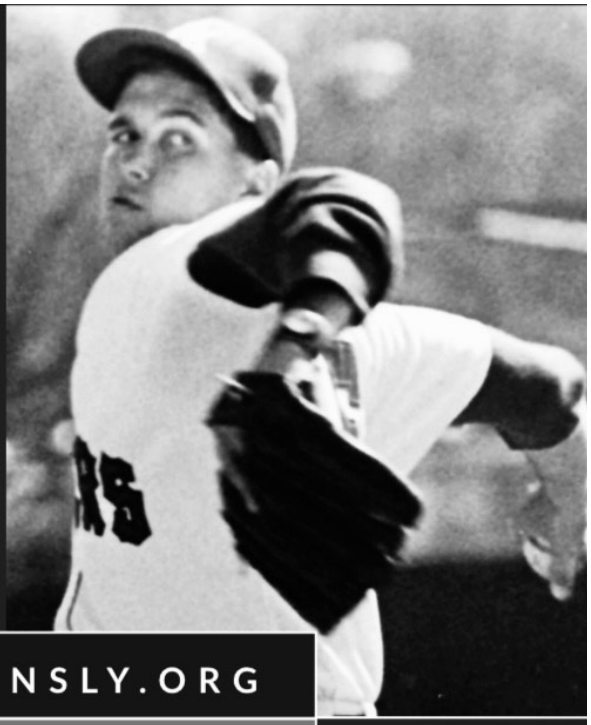
In 1938, the Bulldogs defeated Bowling Green and Akron St. Vincent before bowing to eventual champ Newark in the semis. In 1937, Bridgeport beat Salem before bowing to eventual champ Hamilton in the quarterfinals.

Kouski earned an Ohio State football scholarship from Hall of Fame coach Paul Brown and played his freshman year before joining the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II. He reportedly was offered a pro contract from the Pittsburgh Steelers upon leaving military service but decided to go to work for Wheeling Steel.

He was inducted into the Bridgeport Wall of Fame in 2023.

Congratulations
HEATH HAYNES
Linsly Class of 1987

on your induction into the
OVAC HALL OF FAME



The Linsly School

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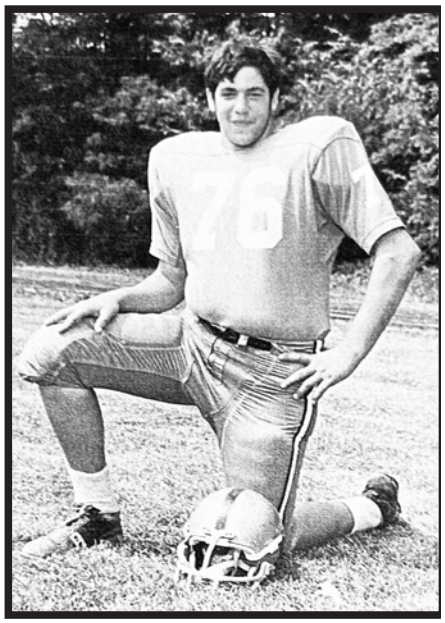
Call 304.233.1436 or visit www.linsly.org/admissions

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Big E,

We are so proud of your success and achievements!
Our family couldn't be happier for you.
Love You!

JoAnn DeSantis
Cindy Sperry
Sue and Bill Hammack
Bill, Lisa and Gabby DeSantis
Todd and Jessie Kirkpatrick & Family
Joe and Crystal Hammack & Family



Hall of Fame

Hall of Fame

The Indian Creek Athletic Department

congratulates



Alex Young

(Indian Creek High School, Class of 2013)

Hall of Fame

THE CREEK

Hall of Fame

The Wheeling Park Athletic Department

congratulates



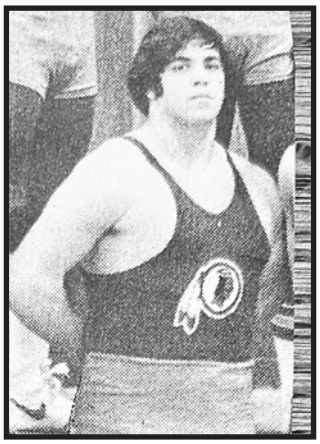
Errin Baynes

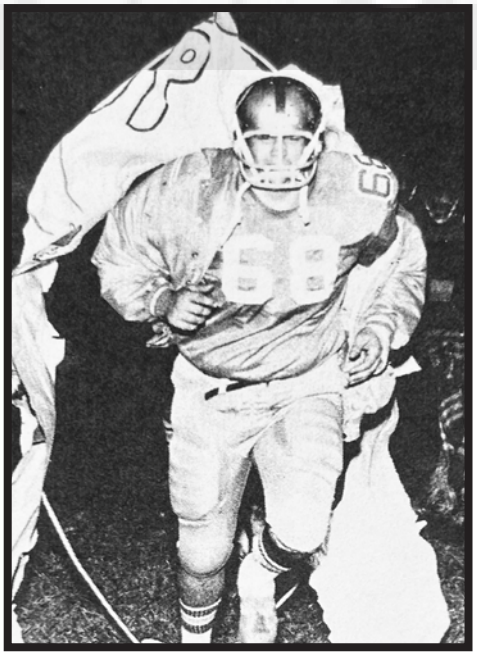
Wheeling Park High School
Class of 2012

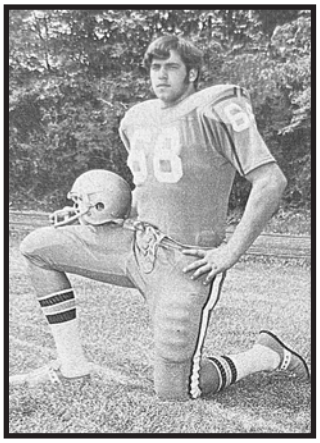
OVAC Hall of Fame
Class of 2025

Congratulations, 1985 Wintersville Golden Warrior Ernie Andria!

What a great achievement it is to be inducted into the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Hall of Fame, adding to the many others you have earned over the last 50 years. Not only have you always put your family first, but you found the time and commitment to be a truly remarkable role model, coach, volunteer and community member and leader. Way to go! Enjoy this honor.







You're still a Golden Warrior
Love ya, Jude

Bridgeport Exempted Village School District

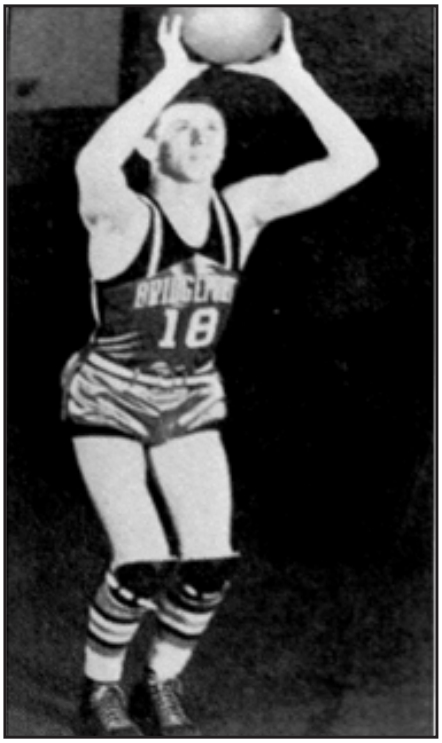
Tradition. Community. The Future. Our Responsibility.

The Bridgeport Exempted Village School District, Board of Education, Administration, Faculty, and Staff proudly congratulate John Kouski, Class of 1940, and Dan Delande, Class of 1965 on their well-deserved induction into the OVAC Hall of Fame!

Their legacies as Bridgeport Bulldogs have stood the test of time, earning them a place in both the Bridgeport Athletic Hall of Fame and the hearts of generations who admire their achievements.

To the families of John and Dan, we hope this honor fills you with pride and joy, celebrating the dedication, character, and excellent they both embodied. Their impact on our community and athletic history will never be forgotten.

Go Bulldogs!



John Kouski
Class of 1940



Dan Delande
Class of 1965

Congratulations
Jim Fryfogle - OVAC Legend
From the Noble Local School District,
Board of Education,
Administration and Staff



DAN DELANDE



THE OHIO VALLEY BOARD
OF BASKETBALL OFFICIALS

SALUTES

DAN DELANDE
AND
JOE HISSOM

FOR THEIR INDUCTION
INTO THE OVAC
HALL OF FAME



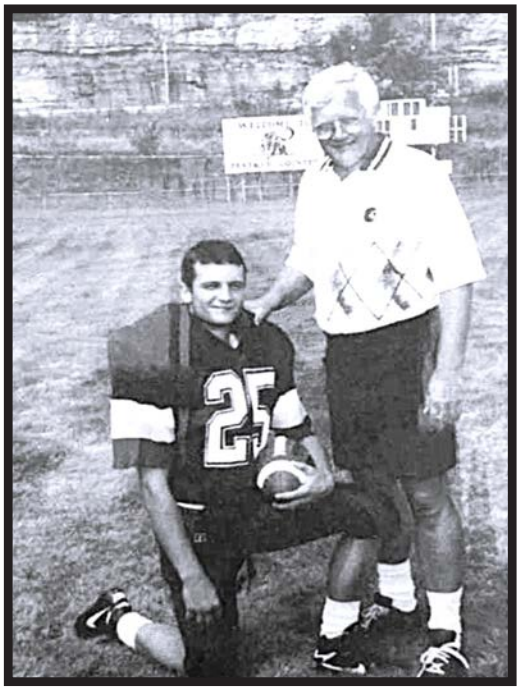


JOE HISSOM

Congratulations
Ron and Chet Pobolish
on your induction into
the OVAC Hall of Fame

From
Rick DeLuca

Hall of Fame

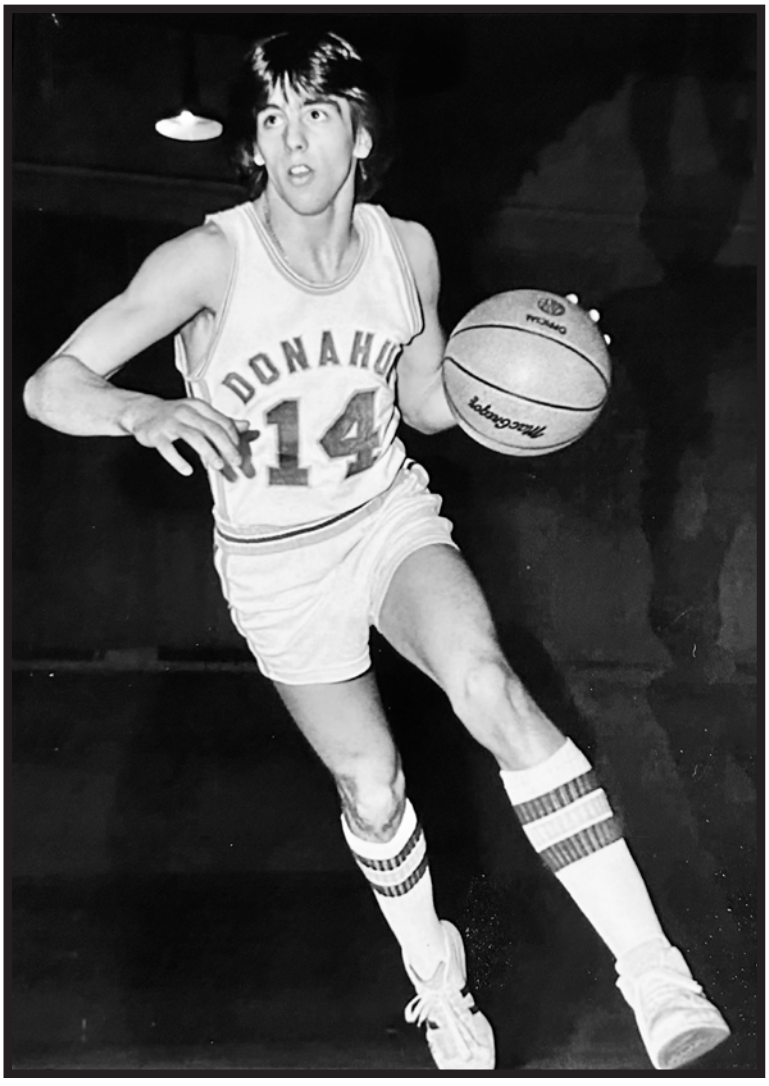


CONGRATULATIONS

GARY FONNER

ON YOUR INDUCTION INTO

THE OVAC HALL OF FAME



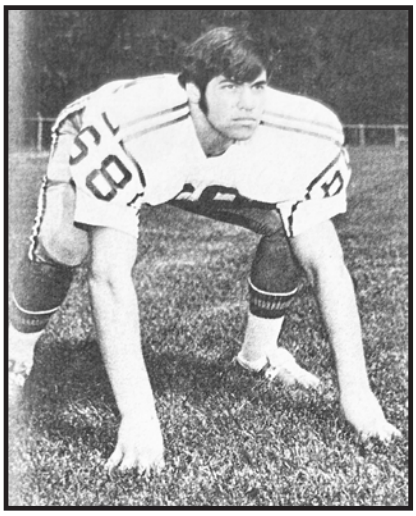
SO PROUD OF YOU!

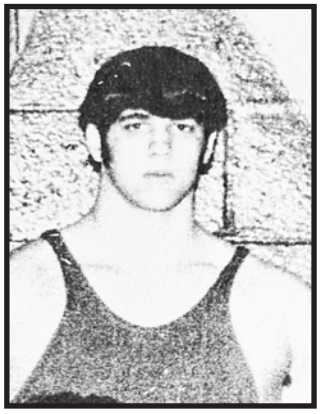
LOVE YOU, YOUR FAMILY

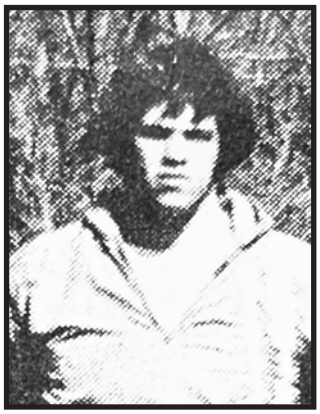
CONGRATULATIONS TO MY DAD, ERNIE ANDRIA!

So proud of your accomplishments and success. You're a true inspiration and role model and I've always looked up to you.

LOVE YOU, KATIE







Hall of Fame

CONGRATULATIONS
COACH CRAIG SCHNEID
ST. JOHN CENTRAL CLASS OF 1973

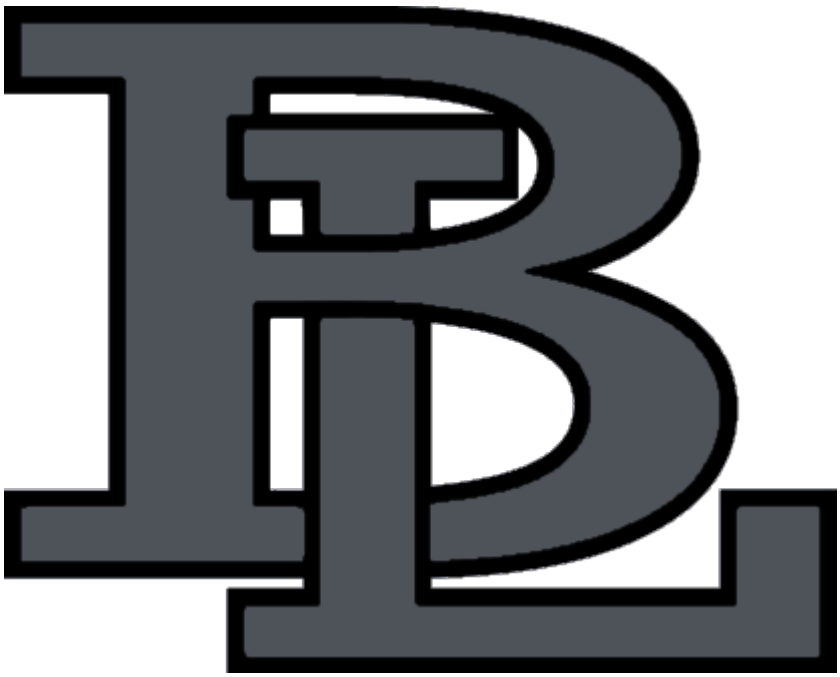
Hall of Fame

YOUR COACHING CAREER
WAS TRULY REMARKABLE
AND YOU DID IT
WITH TOTAL CLASS

Hall of Fame

PROUD OF YOU,
BUBBA KAPRAL

Hall of Fame



Congratulations

Derek Wolfe

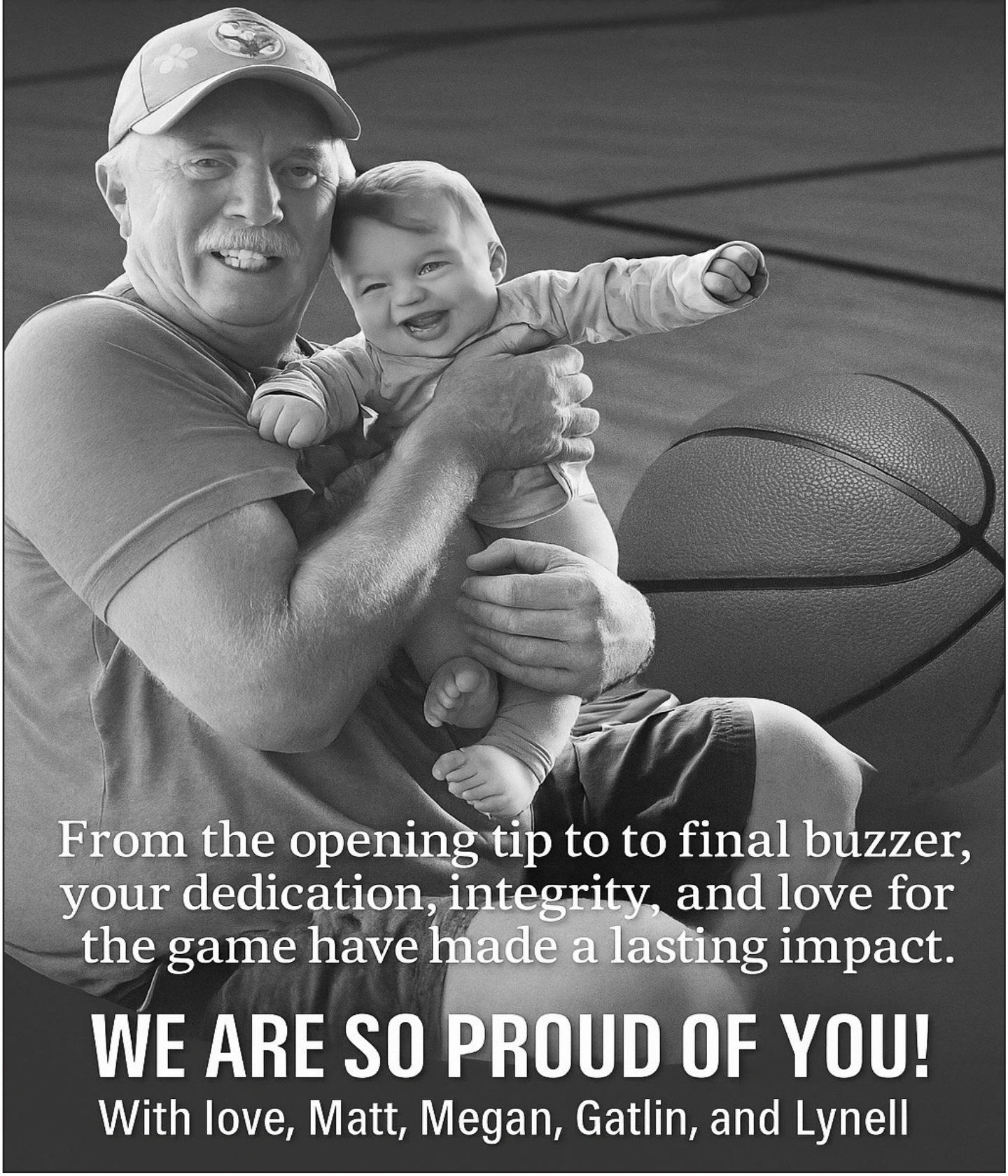
Beaver Local High School, Class of 2007

We are proud of all
of your accomplishments!

Beaver Local Schools

CONGRATULATIONS, JOE!

2025 OVAC Hall of Fame Inductee - Basketball Official



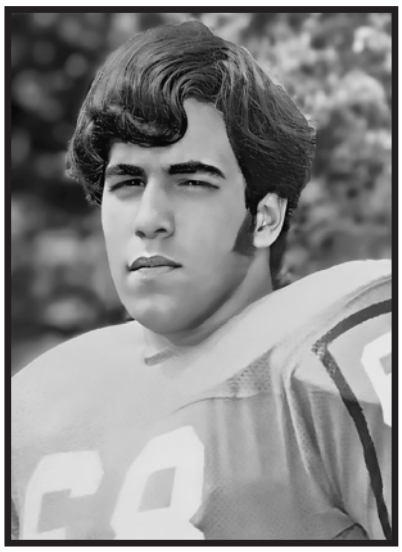
From the opening tip to to final buzzer, your dedication, integrity, and love for the game have made a lasting impact.

WE ARE SO PROUD OF YOU!

With love, Matt, Megan, Gatlin, and Lynell

The Indian Creek Athletic Department

congratulates



Ernie Andria

(Wintersville High School, Class of 1975)

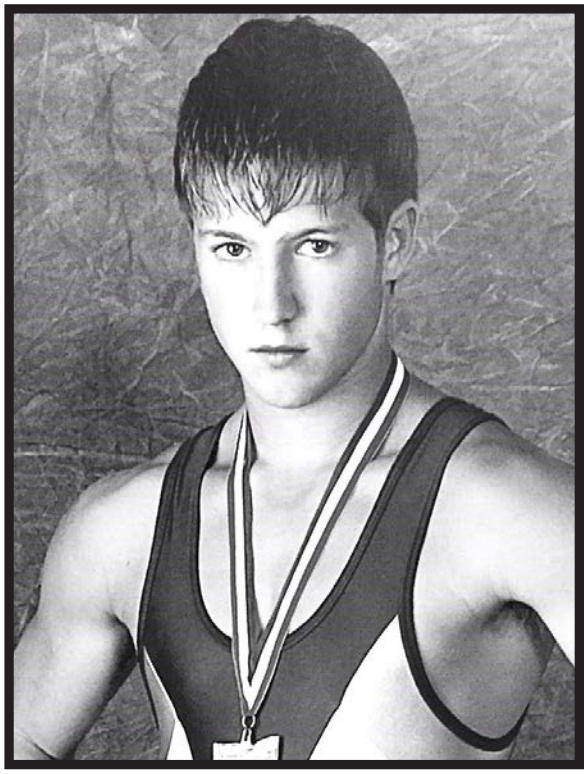
Hall of Fame

WINTERSVILLE WARRIORS

Hall of Fame

The Martins Ferry City Schools

congratulate



Clay Tucker

(MFHS Class of 2005)

for his induction

into the OVAC Hall of Fame

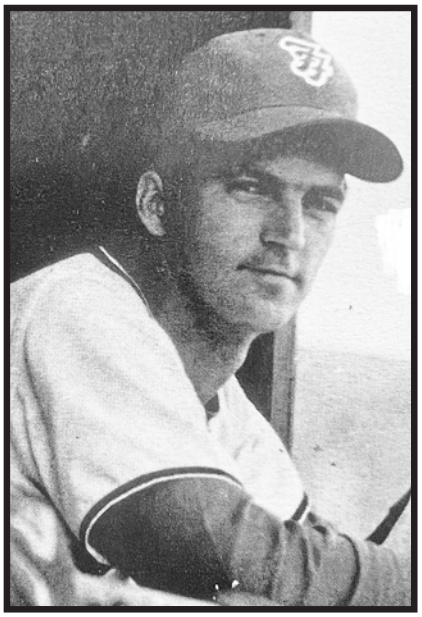
Class of 2025

Rich Mamie

Bellaire High School, Class of 1996

Congratulations on being inducted into the OVAC Hall of Fame!

The Bellaire Local Schools,
Athletic Department,
Board of Education
and Administration



Larry Handschumacher
Salem-Libery High School
Class of 1963

CONGRATULATIONS

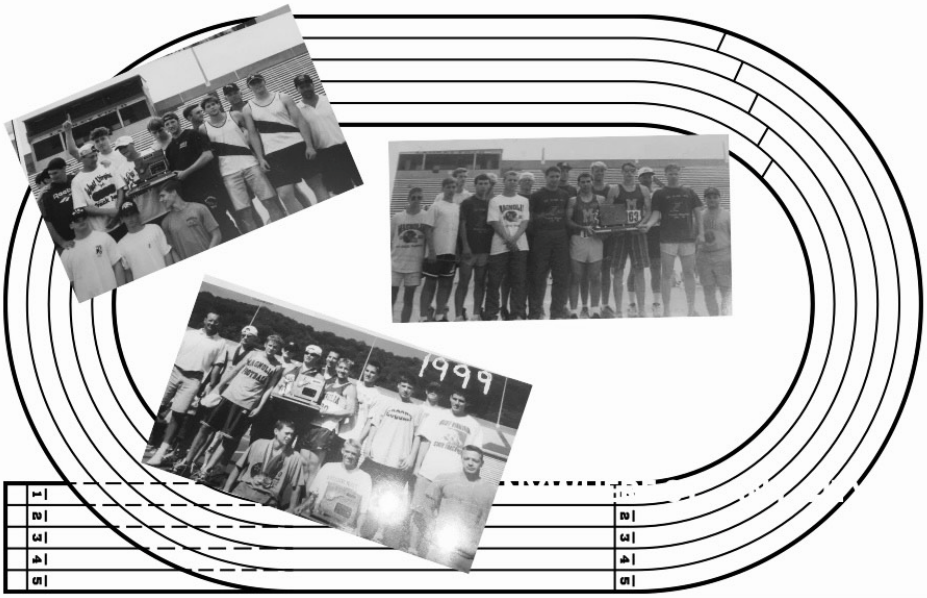
LARRY

FROM THE FORT FRYE ATHLETIC BOOSTERS

FORT FRYE CADETS

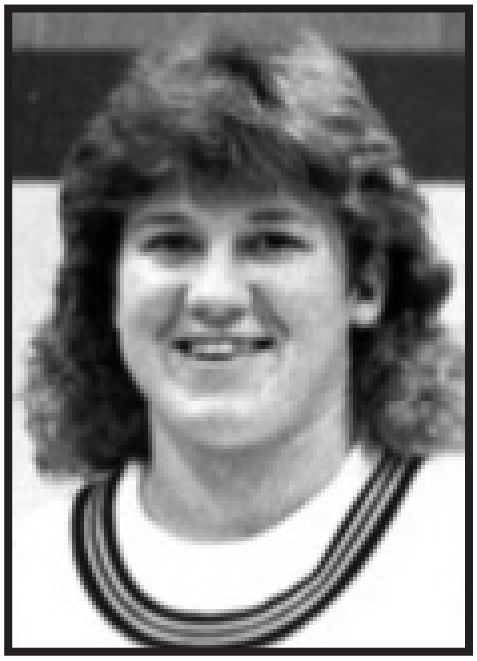
CONGRATS, COACH SCHNEID!

We are so proud of you and all of your accomplishments!
Thank you for your dedication to Magnolia High School.
Congrats-
The Magnolia Athletic Boosters





CONGRATULATIONS



ANN OSBORNE

ST. CLAIRSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL
CLASS OF 1984

OVAC HALL OF FAME
INDUCTEE 2025!

ST. CLAIRSVILLE
RED DEVILS

Congratulations to our dear friend



Dan Delande

Wish you could have been here to receive this great honor



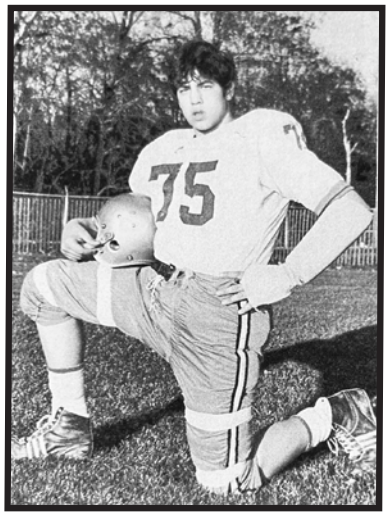
Bob & Cheryl Gabel

Hall of Fame

Congratulations, Uncle Ernie!

**What an incredible honor to be inducted into the OVAC Hall of Fame.
Your hard work, dedication and passion have clearly
left a lasting legacy and this recognition is well deserved.
You've made your entire family extremely proud.
Here's to celebrating your achievements and the impact you have made!**

Hall of Fame



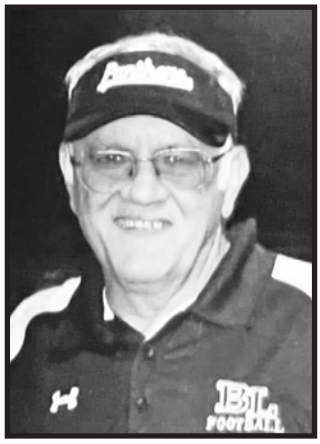
The Andria Family

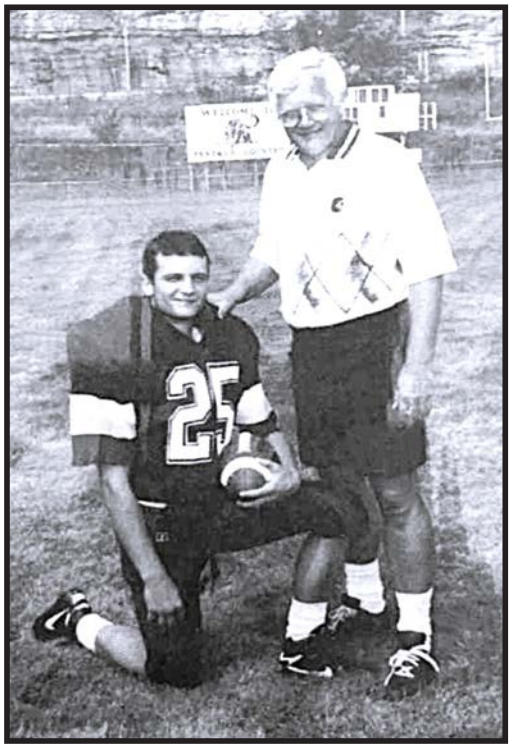
Wanita Andria Taylor
Mike and Tomi Jean Taylor & Family
Chris and Gena Taylor & Family
Stacey and Nathan Zink
Lisa Beveridge & Family
Heather Schumacher

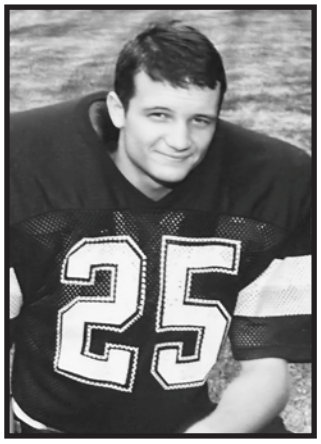
The Buckeye Local Athletic Department

congratulates

Coach Ron Pobolish and Chet Pobolish for being inducted into the OVAC Hall of Fame!

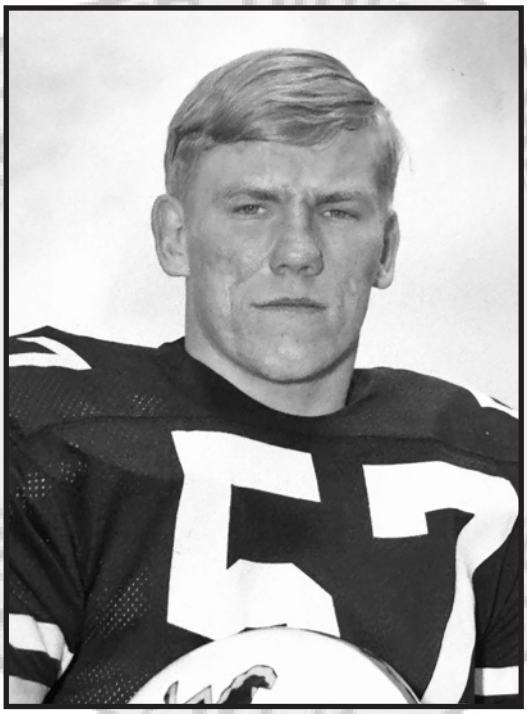






The Wheeling Park Athletic Department

congratulates



Gerald Schultze

Wheeling High School
Class of 1969

OVAC 'Legend'
Class of 2025

Heath Haynes

2025 OVAC Hall of Fame Inductee

It has been a privilege to have met so many extraordinary people who have helped me become the baseball player and person that I am today. Thank you to all of the numerous friend and family for your support and encouragement over the years.

Special Thanks:

Frank "GC Hayes (Dad)
Barbara Haynes (Mom)
Jill Haynes Gump (Sister)
Eileen Haynes (Wife)
Gary Sprague (Linsly Coach/OVAC Hall of Famer)
Terry Depew (Linsly Assistant Coach/OVAC Hall of Famer)
Mike 'Pie' Anthony (Wiffle Ball Extraordinaire)
Steve Powell (Wiffle Ball Extraordinaire)
1985-87 Linsly Baseball (Teammates)
The Linsly School
Wheeling Post #1 (Coaches and Teammates)
Pony Baseball (Coaches and Teammates)
Joan Knox (4th Grade Teacher)



Congratulations to University High School's John Kelley!

John W. Kelley - University High School 1983-2024
UHS Teacher/Coach - Football (41 years), Track (7 year)
WV Coaches Hall of Fame, Top 10 All-Time Wins in WV, 23 State Playoff Apearances, 1994 State Runner-Up, Multiple Conference Championships & Coach of the Year Awards

THANK YOU FOR 41 YEARS OF TEACHING/COACHING AT UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL. THANK YOU FOR YOUR LOYAL DEDICATION TO OUR STUDENT-ATHLETES, THE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT, THE UHS FOOTBALL PROGRAM AND THE UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY!

FROM,

THE UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION, ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT, FOOTBALL PROGRAM, FACULTY AND STAFF, AND COMMUNITY

Barnesville Shamrock
ATHLETICS

Congratulations to Joe Hissom!

Very well deserved honor.

Such a great official

for so many years!





Hall of Fame

Rocks

Hall of Fame

Congratulations

Clay Tucker

OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2025

PURPLE RIDER BOOSTER CLUB
P.O. Box 395
Martins Ferry, OH 43935



PLATINUM SPONSOR
Martins Ferry DeFelice Brothers Piza

GOLD SPONSORS
Chirp's Auto Body, Hanover Fuel Stop, The Pool Place, Best Choice Pool Service,
Totterdale Bros. Supply Company. Belmont Brewerks, LaRoche Tree Service,
Theaker & Son Excavating, N.F. Mansuetto, American Legion Post 38,
Deluxe Toy & Hobby, ValleyWide Insurance, Dan Stephens State Farm Insurance,
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Martins Ferry Convenient Food Mart, Jacob & Sons Meats,
AnneMike Cleaning LLC, Cloud 9 Salon & Spa, Total Sports Connection,
Ferry Hardware, Abbey's Retaurant & Lounge, Belmont Savings Bank,
Linda Brown Allstate Insurance, Muxie Distributing, World Gym, Zontini's Pizza,
WVU Medicine, Harrison Community Hospital, Bellaire Sons of Italy Lodge 754,
Just Meds Pharmacy, Movers 4 You, Tokyo Hibachi Restaurant,
Riesbeck's Food Markets, Martins Ferry Alumni Association, Dr. Dan Jones,
Nu 2 U Flea Market, Carolina Furniture, Bridgeport Equipment,
Ultimate Signs & Graphics, Colerain Golf Cart Sales, Dr. Paige Durkin,
Elks Lodge, Suzanne's Fashion & Bridal, Prom & Tuxedo, Crummitt & Sons,
Domino's Pizza, Main Street Bank, Milhous Plantation, Village Network,
Hot Rod Tatooing & Body Piercing, Epic Restoration, Erb Electric,
RSQP Print & Design, Wash-Rite, Martins Ferry Carry Out, The Homestead,
Fred's Oil Exchange, W&W Family Contruction, Big G Automotive & Fabrication,
C.A. House, Keller Funeral Home, Forever Young, Ease Rehab & Wellness



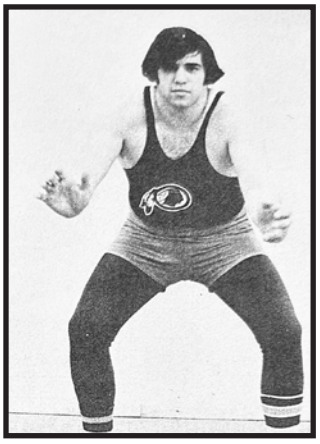
Purple Rider Booster Club
Officers
President Fred Beck 740-633-5723
Vice President Dave Maguire 740-296-3152
Treasurer Bobbie Jo Maguire 740-296-3153
Secretary John Holmes 740-632-9156

Email - prbooster1947@gmail.com
Facebook - Purple Rider Booster Club

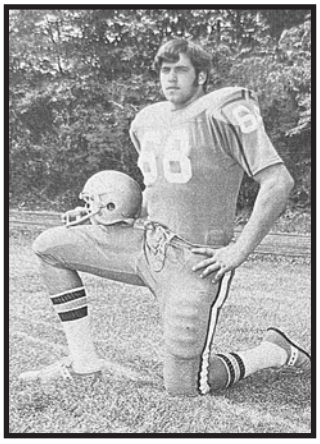


Ernie Andria

You've been the geatest Father, Grandfather, Husband, role model, supporter and every other leadership role that can be taken to me and our family. We are so proud of you, and congratulations on your induction into the OVAC Hall of Fame.



Love you!
Your family - Ernie and Nikki, Dominic, Joelle, and Addie





Congratulations

Dan Delande



From
The Ohio Valley Board of Softball Officials

27 Years as Softball Umpire
Officer, Executive Committee Member of OV Board of Softball Officials
OHSAA Officials Inductee in 2025

wwwW

CONGRATULATIONS

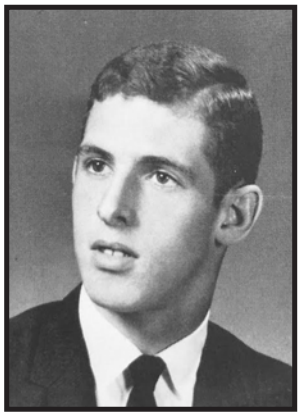
JOE HISSOM

ON YOUR INDUCTION INTO THE OVAC HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2025!







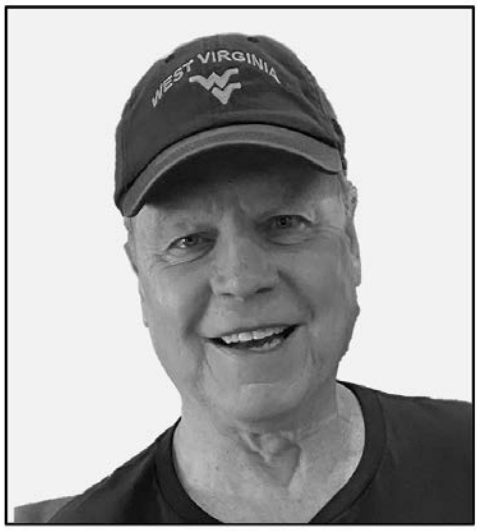


Congratulations to the OVAC for the many years of success.

Jim Fryfogle
Shenandoah High School
Class of 1969

Central Catholic High School

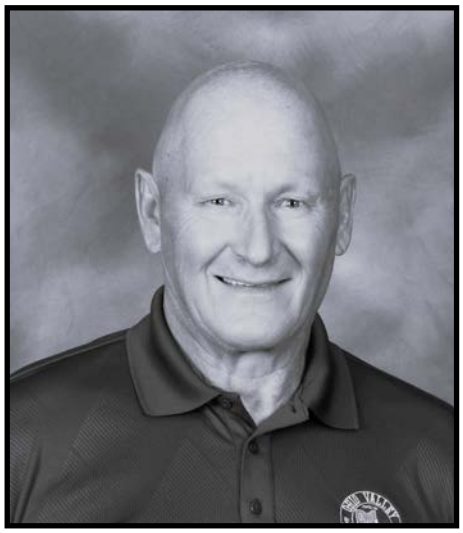
Congratulates



Pat Korsnick
Class of 1968



Coach Craig Schneid



Steve Wojcik
Class of 1969

Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2025!

#MaroonKnights
#AlwaysAKnight

Stephens-Matthews
Marketing, Inc.

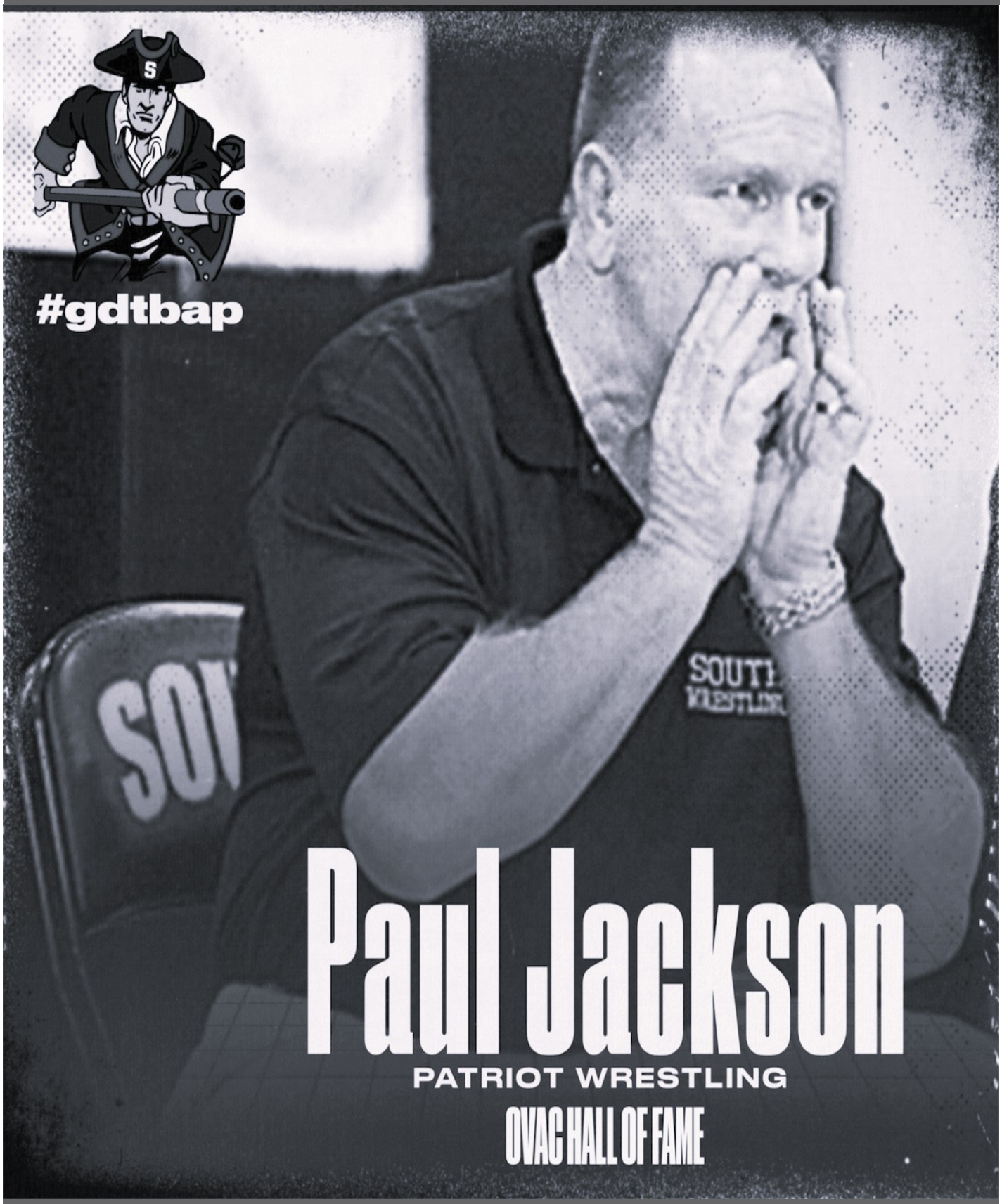
You are as respected and admired in the business world as you were in the sports world.

Congratulations

Larry Handschumacher

From your teammates at
Stephens-Matthews Marketing




#gdtbap
Paul Jackson
PATRIOT WRESTLING
OVAC HALL OF FAME

STEVE WOJCIK

Congratulations

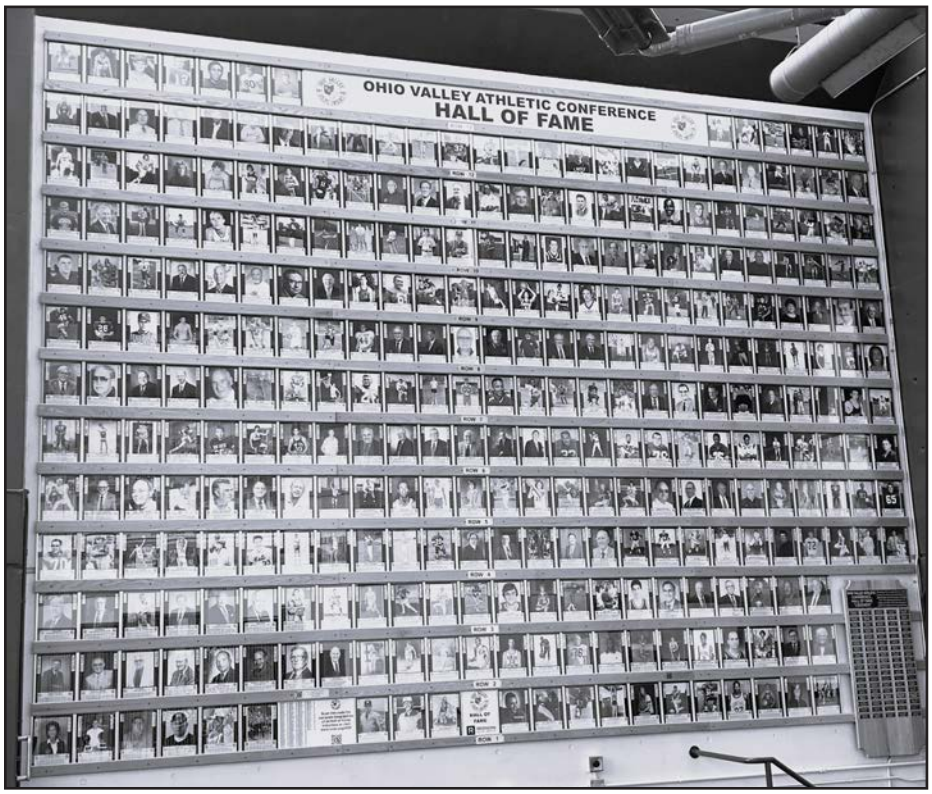
on being inducted into the OVAC Hall of Fame. This is a true acknowledgment of your life long commitment to coaching and mentorship, and your dedication as OVAC baseball commissioner.

We are so proud of you! We love you, Steve-Dad-Pap!
Denny, Stephanie and Kevin, Brian and Jennifer, Amy and Brennan, Gillian, Sloane, Jules, Arden, Cameron, Bridget and Catherine.

Congratulations

Coach Mike Del Re

Madonna High School
150 Michael Way
Weirton, WV 26062
304-723-0545 Phone
304-723-0564 Fax
www.weirtonmadonna.org
Weirton Madonna Blue Dons
weirtonmadonna
@MadonnaBlueDons



The OVAC Hall of Fame display located in the concourse of WesBanco Arena

The OVAC
Hall of Fame Committee
and
Executive Board
congratulate
all of this year's
Hall of Fame and 'Legends' inductees
for their significant role
in the history of the nation's largest
high school athletic conference!

OVAC Hall of Fame

Gallery of Previous Inductees

Dan Abramowicz (Class of 2012)
Alexa Abrams (Class of 2024)
Pete Abuls (Class of 2021)
Jamie Adams (Class of 2019)
Ken Alessi (Class of 2004)
Roger Alford (Class of 2017)
Nick Aloi (Class of 2013)
Zach Amedro (Class of 2016)
Gene Ammirante (Class of 2012)
Ralph Anastasio (Class of 2021)
Tim Anderson (Class of 2009)
Sam Andy (Class of 2007)
Kim Augur (Class of 2016)
Wendy Baker (Class of 2006)
Scott Barnhouse (Class of 2024)
Jodi Bates (Class of 2016)
Ashley Battle (Class of 2011)
Frank Baxter (Class of 2010)
Tom 'Bear' Bechtel (Class of 2012)
Eddie Becker (Class of 2016)
Nick Bedway (Class of 2007)
Jami Bendle (Class of 2017)
Jack Berger (Class of 2018)
Joanna Bernabei (Class of 2010)
Sam 'Buzz' Berry (Class of 2015)
David Bertolino (Class of 2014)
Paul 'Bud' Billiard (Class of 2006)
Joe "JoJo' Blaha (Class of 2021)
Stan Blankenship (Class of 2016)
Tom Bloom (Class of 2021)
Rick Boron (Class of 2011)
Stan Boroski (Class of 2014)
David Bosley (Class of 2009)
Chad Brinker (Class of 2014)
Jim Brown (Class of 2013)
Leekycia Brown (Class of 2021)
Less Browne (Class of 2010)
Bill Brubaker (Class of 2014)
Bob Bruney (Class of 2022)
Dave Bruney (Class of 2019)
Fred Bruney (Class of 2010)
Ed Burgy (Class of 2006)
Bob Burton (Class of 2005)
Dave Caldwell (Class of 2017)
Jim Capito (Class of 2022)
Burdell 'Jimmy' Carey (Class of 2012)
Shelly Carroll (Class of 2019)
Don Cash (Class of 2023)
Jennie Castle (Class of 2023)
Gene Cattane (Class of 2007)
Darrell Cheripko (Class of 2024)
Jay Circosta (Class of 2019)
Dave Cisar (Class of 2022)
Mark Cisar (Class of 2008)
Willie Clay (Class of 2011)
Don Clegg (Class of 2019)
Kim Clifford (Class of 2021)
Plennie Clutter (Class of 2011)
Rick Coles (Class of 2014)
Zach Collaros (Class of 2018)
James Companion (Class of 2014)
Tom 'Chip' Coulter (Class of 2024)
Marty Coyne (Class of 2009)
Mike Coyne (Class o2022)
Scott Coyne (Class of 2019)
John Craig (Class of 2008)
Sylvia Crawley (Class of 2013)
Jim Crosier (Class of 2019)
Andy Cross (Class of 2016)
Rafael Cruz (Class of 2024)
Suzie Dailer (Class of 2008)
Chet Daniels (Class of 2019)
Harold 'Doc' Daugherty (Class of 2009)
Koel Davia (Class of 2023)
Bill Davies (Class of 2010)
Dee Davis (Class of 2005)
Jose Davis (Class of 2007)
Nate Davis (Class of 2017)
Boib Dawson (Class of 2023)
Georgia Dawson (Class of 2018)
Mike Dawson (Class of 2009)
Larry Deaton (Class of 2021)
C.R. 'Dick' Dei (Class of 2011)
George Deiderich (Class of 2019)
Dave Delande (Class of 2016)
Rick DeLuca (Class of 2010)
Terry Depew (Class of 2022)
Edmund DiBacco (Class of 2022)
Bob DiStefano (Class of 2019)
Steve Doe (Class of 2023)
Randy Donahue (Class of 2011)
Charles 'Red' Donley (Class of 2012)
Doug Donley (Class of 2004)
Bobby Douglas (Class of 2004)
Connie Doutt (Class of 2008)
Dr. Dan Doyle (Class of 2019)
Eddie Drummond (Class of 2014)
Larry Duck (Class of 2010)
D.J. Duke (Class of 2022)
Ashley Dunigan (Class of 2024)
Clyde Eads (Class of 2015)
Richard 'Dick' Edge (Class of 2009)
Amber Ellison (Class of 2012)
Mark Emmerling (Class of 2013)
Tyler Engle (Class of 2019)
Chris Enochs (Class of 2007)
John 'Fuzzy' Filliez (Class of 2005)
David 'Ty' Fleming (Class of 2015)
Don Fleming (Class of 2007)
Carl Fodor (Class of 2021)
Darin Ford (Class of 2022)
Gene Ford (Class of 2009)
Geno Ford (Class of 2004)
Joe Fortunato (Class of 2007)
Jim Foti (Class of 2004)
Justin Fox (Class of 2023)
Tom Franckhauser (Class of 2017)
Bob Gain (Class of 2006)
Joey Galloway (Class of 2005)
Amy Gamble (Class of 2004)
Matt Gaudio (Class of 2005)
Rich 'Hoot' Gibson (Class of 2013)
Cal Giffin (Class of 2006)
Roy 'Al' Glitch (Class of 2019)
Ron 'Cy' Godfrey (Class of 2013)
Bill Gompers (Class of 2017)
Pete Gongola (Class of 2019)
Gordon Gordon (Class of 2014)
Chester Grossi (Class of 2005)
Alex Groza (Class of 2005)
Mike Gulan (Class of 2019)
Earl Haberfield (Class of 2018)
Neil Habig (Class of 2016)
Richard 'Lefty' Hall (Class of 2006)
John 'Streaky' Haloszka (Class of 2010)
Melissa Hammond (Class of 2010)
Jay Handlan (Class of 2016)
Jim Hanna (Class of 2009)
Mitch Hannahs (Class of 2004)
T.J. Hannig (Class of 2011)
Jeff Harrison (Class of 2017)
John Havlicek (Class of 2004)
Lori Heady (Class of 2002)
Henry 'Hen' Healy (Class of 2022)
William 'Catfish' Hearst (Class of 2017)
Bob Hedmond (Class of 2008)
Art Hehr (Class of 2012)
Walter Heil (Class of 2005)
Bill Hinegardner (Class of 2007)
Jessica Hines (Class of 2023)
Brittany Hocker (Class of 2015)
Roger Holdinsky (Class of 2022)
Paul Hoover (Class of 2015)
Adam Hoppel (Class of 2108)
Allan Hornyak (Class of 2004)
John Howell (Class of 2013)
Kenny Howell (Class of 2012
Chuck Howley (Class of 2005)
Doug Huff (Class of 2005)
Bob Hummell (Class of 2006)
Karrie Hutchins (Class of 2014)
Jennifer Hyland (Class of 2007)
Mike Ingram (Class of 2014)
Alan Jack (Class of 2014)
Leon Jenkins (Class of 2019
Bob Jeter (Class of 2011)
Tony Jeter (Class of 2021)
Bill Jobko (Class of 2009)
Daryl 'Boogie' Johnson (2021)
Rod Johnson (Class of 2015)
Chris Jones (Class of 2017)
Henry Josefczyk (Class of 2010)
Arthur 'Butch' Joseph (Class of 2017)
Donna Joseph (Class of 2007)
Eudie Joseph (Class of 2012)
Rudy Jovicic (Class of 2015)
Robert 'Bubba' Kapral (2021)
Tom Keane (Class of 2008)
Charlie Keenan (Class of 2009)
George Kellas (Class of 2015)
Bob Kelley (Class of 2007)
Bill Kennedy (Class of 2008)
Jim Kerr (Class of 2014)
Dick Kerwood (Class of 2012)
Bob Kettlewell (Class of 2008)
John Kirker (Class of 2011)

OVAC Hall of Fame

Gallery of Previous Inductees

Steve Kish Jr. (Class of 2018)
Earl Klevins (Class of 2007)
Bob Koch (Class of 2018)
George Kovalick (Class of 2004)
Mike Kovalick (Class of 2008)
Penn Kurtz (Class of 2023)
Lance LaFollette (Class of 2023)
Gene 'Beef' Lamone (Class of 2015)
Henry 'Hank' Lazasz (Class of 2009)
, Ron Lee (Class of 2018)
Terry Leggett (Class of 2017)
John Leon (Class of 2007)
Roger Levi (Class of 2024)
Dave Linn (Class of 2016)
Aric Long (Class of 2024)
Scot Maffe (Class of 2017)
John Magistro (Class of 2024)
Denny Magruder (Class of 2015)
Larry Marmie (Class of 2013)
Joe Maroon (Class of 2012)
Edgar Martin (Class of 2011)
Gary 'Tony' Marvin (2022)
Teddi Jo Maslowski (Class of 2022)
Ron Mauck (Class of 2006)
Bill Mazeroski (Class of 2004)
Bo McConnaughy (Class of 2007)
Jim McCormick (Class of 2011)
Tim McCoy (Class of 2013)
Tim McCrate (Class of 2023)
Curtis McGee (Class 2022)
Eric McGee (Class of 2018)
Don 'Kip' McLane (2021)
Mike McLeod (Class of 2015)
Lance Mehl (Class of 2005)
Craig Miller (Class of 2011)
Dick Miller (Class of 2005)
Pat Miller (Class of 2011)
Dr. Vince Monseau (Class of 2009)
Dan Monteroso (Class of 2024)
Bob Montgomery Class of 2018)
Harry "Moo" Moore (Class of 2013)
James 'Junior' Moore (Class of 2014)
Stephanie Morgan (Class of 2022)
Jimmy Mountain (Class of 2016)
Tim Moxley (Class of 2009)
Nick Mumley (Class of 2008)
Rudy Mumley (Class of 2005)
Samuel A. Mumley (Class of 2004)
Rob Munn (Class of 2016)
A. Wilson Murrary (Class of 2004)
Linda Myers (Class of 2015)
Jerry Narcisi (Class of 2021)
Rick Nau (Class of 2015)
Boyd Nelson (Class of 2006)
John Nese (Class of 2016)
Joe Niekro (Class of 2010)
Phil Niekro (Class of 2006)
Rhonda Noble (Class of 2013)
Lou Nocida (Class of 2024)
Max Nogay (Class of 2023)
Scott Nolte (Class of 2021)
Kim North (Class of 2024)
Bob O'Brien (Class of 2024)
Don Osby (Class of 2018)
Mike Palmer (Class of 2021)
Bill Paolisso (Class of 2009)
Ed Pastilong (Class of 2015)
Lee Patrone (Class of 2006)
Jeff Patterson (Class of 2019)
Natalie Perzanowski (Class of 2021)
Stephanie Petho (Class of 2004)
Jay Peterson (Class of 2008)
Joe Pettini (Class of 2008)
Charles E. Petty (Class of 2011)
Bethany Piccolini (Class of 2013)
Bob Plotz (Class of 2018)
Cal Pokas (Class of 2004)
Jim Potts (Class of 2014)
Richard L. 'Dick' Potts (Class of 2004)
Duane Powell (Class of 2015)
Matt Powell (Class of 2016)
Peri Powell (Class of 2013)
Jack Prettyman (Class of 2014)
Robert Pritchard (Class of 2018)
Warren Pugh (Class of 2006)
Vicki Pullie (Class of 2004)
Terry Rataiczak (Class of 2024)
Thomas E. Rataiczak (Class of 2013)
Fred Ray (Class of 2023)
Dick Reasbeck (Class of 2023)
Anthony Reed (Class of 2007)
John Reger (Class of 2007)
Evan Reese (Class of 2004)
Gary Repella (Class of 2017)
Liz Repella (Class of 2019)
Lisa Ribble (Class of 2024)
Paul Rickards (Class of 2014)
Bob Rieves (Class of 2008
Kelly Rine (Class of 2023)
Bob Robinson (Class of 2023)
Bob Roe (Class of 2014)
Blaine Rose (Class of 2013)
Kyle Rose (Class of 2010)
April Rotilio (Class of 2017)
Al Salvadori (Class of 2023)
Geno Sessi (Class of 2018)
Larry Shaw (Class of 2011)
Libby Shepherd (Class of 2024)
Mike Sherwood (Class of 2005)
Kelly Shields (Class of 2018)
Bobby Sismondo (Class of 2024)
Ron Sismondo (Class of 2019)
John Simonson (Class of 2018)
Bruce Smith (Class of 2006)
Mike Smith (Class of 2014)
Jeff Snedegar (Class of 2006)
Mike Snively (Class of 2017)
Terry Snively (Class of 2005)
Courtney Snyder (Class of 2022)
Keith Sommer (Class of 2024)
John Sorrenti (Class of 2009)
Roger Sowers (Class of 2017)
Tim Spencer (Class of 2004)
Gary Sprague (Class of 2012)
Chris Starr (Class of 2012)
Jedidiah Stephen (Class of 2013)
Dan Stephens (Class of 2014)
John Stephenson (Class of 2010)
Jimmy Stewart (Class of 2008)
Ross Stoltz (Class of 2017)
George Strager (Class of 2005)
Shawn Straughn (Class of 2023)
Seth Staskey (Class of 2022)
Ron Stephens (Class of 2018)
Richard Summers (Class of 2022)
Don Sutherin (Class of 2010)
Dennis Swearingen (Class of 2006)
Doug Swearingen (Class of 2012)
Jeff Sweitzer (Class of 2010)
Kelly Swierkos (Class of 2015)
Brian Swisher (Class of 2005)
Ted Talkington (Class of 2015)
Ben Taylor (Class of 2013)
Jamie Taylor (Class of 2015)
Kinsi Tellep (Class of 2024)
Bill Tonini (Class of 2012)
Bill Thomas (Class of 2008)
Jim Thomas (Class of 20013)
Mark Thompson (Class of 2009)
Richard 'Dick' Thurnes (Class of 2011)
Mike Tomasovich (class of 2023)
Ted Tomasovich (Class of 2023)
Dick Tomlinson (Class of 2017)
Bill Tucker (Class of 2018)
Janis Trupovnieks (Class of 2015)
Agnes Timmons (Class of 2005)
Bill Van Horne (Class of 2004)
Dr. Dianna Vargo (2022)
Ken Vargo (Class of 2013)
Kacie Vavrek (Class of 2016)
Sharon Vincent (Class of 2011)
Shawn Vincent (Class of 2012)
Keith Vrotsos (Class of 2018)
John Vrotsos (Class of 2005)
Charles 'Chuck' Watt (Class of 2010)
Josh Watson (Class of 2021)
Alex Welker (Class of 2012)
Dr. William 'Bill' Welker (2021)
Billy West (Class of 2006)
Tom West (Class of 2016)
Ben Wiley (Class of 2016)
Rich Wilinski (Class of 2021)
Denver Williams (Class of 2012)
Ron 'Fritz' Williams (Class of 2004)
Harry Wilson (Class of 2006)
Quincy Wilson (Class of 2011)
Otis Winston (Class of 2009)
Jim Wood (Class of 2016)
Jeff Woofter (Class of 2022)
Jim Woofter (Class of 2016)
Ron White (Class of 2018)
Mike Wright (Class of 2010)
Tom Yakubowski (Class of 2008)
Donnie Young (Class of 2024)
Don Zinni (Class of 2013)

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Class of 2004

OVAC Hall of Fame

Sponsored by Robinson Auto Group

Samuel A. Mumley (OVAC 'Family')



Samuel A. Mumley (Benwood Union High School) served two terms — covering a total of 32 years — as executive secretary of the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference. During the second term which lasted until his death in 1999, Mumley helped resurrect the bi-state league from the brink of bankruptcy to its current standing as one of the great high school conferences in the entire country.

Some of the many highlights from his stewardship included: Helping to establish the OVAC Foundation as a major fund-raising arm for the conference; Securing NCAA certification for the Rudy Mumley OVAC Charity All-Star Football Classic; Attracting major financial sponsors to support all of the OVAC programs, including the Banquet of Champions, an awards dinner that honors more than 1,000 athletes each spring and provides more than $20,000 annually in scholarships; Establishing the all-star basketball game which was later renamed as the Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic.

Mumley's response to a call of duty went beyond the OVAC as he was one of the founders of the Wheeling Super Six Committee, which has hosted the West Virginia state championship football games at Wheeling Island Stadium since 1994. He also helped secure the West Virginia state soccer championships for the city. Five years after his death, the fruition of another one of his dreams occurred when an artificial grass playing surface was installed at Wheeling Island Stadium.

Although awards were never important to Mumley, he was the recipient of numerous honors. The major awards presented to him included: The National Federation of Officials Outstanding Service Award; Dapper Dan Man of the year; OVAC Man of the Year; and Outstanding West Virginian.

He was a basketball official for 23 years, an assistant coach, athletic trainer and athletic director at several area schools, including Cameron, The Linsly School and St. Clairsville. He was also a trainer at his college alma mater, the University of Maryland, along with the Washington Redskins and Philadelphia Eagles. Mumley served on the state of Ohio Board of Equity, was a member of the St. Clairsville Board of Education and a special liaison for the Mental Retardation Board and School of Hope.

George Kovalick (OVAC 'Family')



George E. Kovalick (Bridgeport High School), recognized as the "father" of high school wrestling in the Ohio Valley. Kovalick previously has been honored with membership in numerous halls of fame, including those at Kent State University; the Ohio Valley Football Coaches Association; Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Club; West Liberty State College; Ohio Athletic Directors and the Ohio Wrestling Hall of Fame.

Kovalick was selected as the first recipient (1976) of the prestigious OVAC Wrestling Committees prestigious "Mr. Mat Award," an honor given annually to an individual for outstanding contributions to the sport of wrestling.

Kovalick directed championship teams in football, baseball and wrestling at both the intercollegiate and interscholastic levels during an enormously-successful 28-year coaching career.

Among the athletes he tutored in high school or college were all-time Ohio Valley greats John Havlicek, Phil and Joe Niekro, and Bobby Douglas. In baseball, Kovalick coached the Hilltoppers to the 1964 NAIA baseball championship. the only national title ever captured by the school. He also had West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference championship teams at West Liberty in football, wrestling and baseball.

Kovalick not only was one of the founders of the OVAC Wrestling Tournament, but his Bridgeport grapplers won the first seven conference championships. In 1959, Kovalick's Bulldogs made history by becoming the first school outside the Cleveland area since 1942 to win an Ohio state wrestling title since1942 to win an Ohio state wrestling title since. He coached six individual state champions.

Kovalickás other OVAC coaching stops were at Moundsville, Bellaire and Weir high schools. His 1973 Weir High football team was a state runner-up, losing to East Bank in the Class AAA state final. He retired from coaching in 1978 but then served as athletic director at Bellaire until the time of his death in 1984.

He was OVAC Baseball Director for many years and also directed the conference's mat championship event.

Along with his great coaching knowledge, Kovalick was also recognized as a marvelous competitor, meticulous organizer and a man with an enormous capacity for work.

Bill Van Horne (Media)



Bill Van Horne (Martins Ferry High School), was the dean of Ohio Valley sports-writers during a legendary newspaper career that spanned 53 years.

Van Horne was sports editor of *The Times Leader* for 25 years and the *Wheeling News-Register* for 28 years, during which time he was recognized by his peers as the most informational and influential writer in Ohio Valley history.

His work with the OVAC over the years was especially instrumental in the success of the wrestling, track and field and cross-country. Van Horne was the second recipient of wrestling's "Mr. Mat" Award in 1977 and he also received the Calvin Giffin Memorial Track Award.

His columns, "Van Horne on Sports," were masterpiece chronicles of the lives of others. A giant in his field and a role model for aspiring writers, Van Horne was admired and respected for his integrity, dedication, fairness, knowledge and compassion.

Van Horne's coverage and support for events like the Wheeling Distance Race (now The Ogden Newspapers 20K Classic), the West Virginia Tennis Open and the (now defunct) Wheeling LPGA Classic helped those events reach prominence in our area. His backing also was a factor in the popularity enjoyed by the Wheeling Ironmen, Wheeling Blues and Wheeling Thunderbirds (now the Wheeling Nailers), professional football, basketball and hockey teams.

Numerous awards and honors were bestowed on Van Horne. The Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club named him Man of the Year in 1993; he was selected as the West Virginia Sportswriter of the Year three times; received the Gene Morehouse Memorial Award for contributions in sportswriting throughout the Mountain State; and he was inducted into numerous halls of fame. Among those were the Wheeling Hall of Fame; the Lou Holtz Upper Ohio Valley Hall of Fame; Ohio Baseball Hall of Fame, Minor League Pro Football Hall of Fame and the Wheeling-Oglebay Tennis Club Hall of Fame. He served as president of the West Virginia Sports Writers Association and was a member of the Football Writers of America. Bill was the first sports-writer from West Virginia to be elected to the Football Writers Board of Directors. He also served as state chairman for the Heisman Trophy selection committee.

Cal Pokas (Media)



Cal Pokas (Bellaire High School) was another giant in the sports writing profession who cut his eye teeth under Bill Van Horne and developed into one of the area's true newspaper greats in his own right.

Pokas, who died in 2000, was employed for 40 years at *The Times Leader*, including 29 memorable years for Ohio Valley sports fans as the sports editor. He also was assistant sports editor, a courthouse and political reporter and Martins Ferry City Editor. Even after his retirement, Cal continued to contribute to his newspaper's sports pages with his weekly "Eye on the Bucks" column about Ohio State football. Pokas also personally saw to it that many of the so-called minor sports such as cross-country, track and volleyball, received their share of coverage in his newspaper.

Pokas was deeply interested in the OVAC throughout his career and he devoted much of his spare time to serving on committees for the Rudy Mumley Charity Football All-Star Classic, along with compiling standings for the football and basketball championship races. He also served on a media relations committee for the bi-state league.

Pokas had a term as president of the Ohio Prep Sports Writers Association, and was commissioner of the Ohio Valley Baseball League for 23 years. His interests in the community went beyond the world of sports as Pokas served on an advisory board for the Salvation Army; was Belmont County Chairman of the Multiple Sclerosis Association; and filled a seat on the Martins Ferry Civil Service Commission for 32 years until his death.

Pokas' honors were numerous. In 1960 he was presented a Community Service Award by United Press International. The Ohio Prep Sports Writers Association named him Sports Writer of the Year in 1976 and he was given a Distinguished Service Award from the Ohio Association of Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches.

Cal was selected to the Ohio Prep Sports Writers Hall of Fame and the UPI Sports Editors Association Hall of Fame. He also received service awards from the Ohio Valley Golf Coaches Association, the OVAC; Ohio Valley Football Coaches Association; Ohio Baseball Hall of Fame; and he was honored to be presented the first Sportsmanship Ethics and Integrity Award for the Eastern District from the OHSAA. Pokas was a "Mr. Mat" award honoree at the OVAC Wrestling Tournament, along with being selected for Bellaire High School's Wall of Fame. He was named as the Honorary Referee for the Wheeling Park Track Classic because of contributions to Ohio Valley youth.

Richard L. 'Dick' Potts (Coaches)



Richard L. "Dick" Potts finished his career as the Ohio Valley's all-time winningest basketball coach with 589 career victories.

Inducted into the Ohio High School Hall of Fame in 1983 by the Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association, Potts coached a total of 40 seasons, all of which where spent in Monroe County. He began in 1951 at Bethel High School. His 1957 Blackhawks came out of the Monroe County hills at tournament time and advanced all the way to the Ohio Class A state finals where they lost by a single point. At the time the school had just 13 boys in grades nine through 12 and all but one of the male students was on the basketball team.

In seven years at Bethel, his teams won more than 20 games five times, including the 27-2 miracle team that played in the state tournament.

When the school was taken into the Skyvue consolidation after the '58 campaign, Potts was named coach of the Golden Hawks where he spent four years before moving on to River High in 1963. He remained at the Pilots' helm through the 1991 season.

The former Hannibal High School athlete was named in 1981 as the recipient of the prestigious Ohio Paul Walker Award, given in memory of Jerry Lucas' high school coach at Middletown, Ohio. Walker was the Buckeye State's all-time winningest coach.

The navy veteran, Potts was the first OVAC coach to reach the 500-win plateau in basketball, reaching that goal with a win over Monroe County rival Woodsfield in 1983.

Considered a master strategist and teacher of the game, Potts may have been at his best during critical situations in post-season play. His teams won seven overtime tournament games, including a nine-OT win achieved by River against Morgan in Class AA sectional play.

Jim Foti (Coaches)



Jim Foti was a basketball coach for 38 years and a head football mentor for 20 seasons. He already has been inducted into the City of Wheeling, West Virginia Sports Writers Association, Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club and John Carroll University's Halls of Fame.

Foti, a native of Jamestown, N.Y., came to the area in 1942 after having coached at Erie (Pa.) Prep. He coached basketball at Warwood, Wheeling Central Catholic and Bellaire. Overall, Foti posted 466 varsity basketball victories, all but 26 coming at OVAC schools. He coached Warwood High to seven West Virginia regional championships and his 1967 Viking squad won the state title. In 1976, his final year as a head coach and the last season before the Ohio County consolidation, Foti's Vikings advanced to the state tournament semifinals before being eliminated. The 1975 team played in the state championship game. He had five W.Va. Catholic title-winning teams at Wheeling Central and guided his squads to OVAC championships in three divisions.

In 1943, Foti had a 24-3 record team at Central, which lost by a point while playing in the Eastern Catholic championships held at Newport, R.I.

Foti's football coaching career produced another 124 victories, including a 90-106-3 record at Warwood, where the Class AA school was saddled with playing one of the most competitive schedules in the area. His 1943 Wheeling Central football team went 9-1 and gained a Steel Bowl berth, where it lost a 20-19 thriller to Rochester, Pa., at Steubenville.

Foti also coached semi-professional basketball for two years as he directed the Wheeling Puritans in 1947 and '48.

Foti coached several outstanding athletes during his distinguished career. Among the Central standouts were James "Dubie" Dailer and Billy Gompers, both of whom went on to play at Notre Dame; Jack McConville, Alabama; Pete Schuetz, Duquesne, and Paul Schuetz, Northwestern. At Warwood he had a role in the development of Chuck Howley, former WVU and Dallas Cowboys' great; Bob Dunlevy (WVU), and basketball standouts Bob Ayers (VMI, Bill Kennedy (Arizona State) and Greg Church (Army).

Evan Reese (Officials)



Evan Reese (Follansbee High School) served as an area high school and college arbiter for more than 50 years. He also officiated football in the Canadian League, the United Football League and the West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

Reese was OVAC Commissioner for both football and basketball officials and he was president of the West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WVIAC) officials in both sports. He worked numerous state and conference tournament championship events throughout his long and storied career.

Reese also was a member of the West Virginia Secondary Schools Activities Commission Advisory Board and he was secretary of the Eastern District Board of Football and Basketball Officials. For many years, he was on the basketball rules committee in the Eastern District.

Today's Ohio Valley officials remember Evan as someone who had a tremendous influence on up-and coming referees.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

A. Wilson Murray (Official)



A. Wilson Murray (Wheeling High School) officiated high school basketball, football, baseball and track for 30 years, from 1946 through 1975. He actually began his officiating career in 1942, the year after he graduated from Wheeling High School. Murray entered the service in 1942 and did not return home until the after World War II had ended.

He worked numerous sectional, district, regional and finals in Ohio, West Virginia and Pennsylvania. He also officiated basketball for 12 years in the Mid-American Conference and the West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. Murray was a referee in the old United Football League in the days of the Wheeling Ironmen professional football team.

He served on the OVAC Executive Board and served for 10 years as the commissioner of the bi-state league's basketball officials. He later was appointed the OVAC's commissioner of football officials, a post he held from 1977 until retiring in 1985. In 1977, he was elected treasurer of the Ohio High School Athletic Association's Commissioners.

Murray officiated six West Virginia state tournaments and two WVIAC tournaments. The former City of Wheeling Treasurer was a three-year football and basketball letterman at Wheeling High School. He played on the Wildcats' 1940 state championship basketball team.

Among the awards he was presented were: Ohio High School Athletic Association's Meritorious Award (1970); a West Virginia Secondary School's Activities Commission Award for his contributions to officiating in the Mountain State; Honorary Life Membership in the Ohio Valley Board of Approved Basketball Officials (1981); OVAC Exemplary Service Award (1981), and an Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club Achievement Award (1982). In 1989, he was selected as the first recipient of the Bobby Dawson Basketball Officials' Award presented at the Samuel A. Mumley OVAC Charity Basketball Classic.

Ken Alessi (Athlete - 1940s)



Ken Alessi (Yorkville High School) was a 5-7, 155-pound basketball guard from 1947-49. He still holds two all-time OVAC scoring records—1,142 points in 32 games as a senior and a career per-game point average of 31.0 for 66 games.

He was the first OVAC player to score 2,000 career points (2,047) after averaging a then-record 35.7 points a game and setting a mark of 70 points, including 31 goals, against Shadyside as a 1948-49 senior. That effort prompted the national exposure in "Ripley's Believe-It-Or-Not."

He also scored 65 points vs. Adena and 55 points vs. Dillonvale in back-to-back games. In one game, he converted 16 straight free throws As a junior, Alessi scored 845 points in 30 games.

A two-time All-OVAC Class A and All-Ohio Class B honoree, he was the leading vote-getter in '49 when he was selected Ohio's Class B Player of the Year.

A three-sport prep standout, he was an All-Eastern Ohio football player as a two-way back and kicker, and he was a shortstop-pitcher in baseball.

Recruited by West Virginia University, he played three seasons (1950-52) and was the starting point guard two years. He led the team in assists as a sophomore while playing with 6-9 All-America Mark Workman.

In 1951, he scored 23 points in a home win over Wake Forest and tallied 18 in a 77-73 loss at Duke, which featured All-America guard Dick Groat, a future Pittsburgh Pirate infielder.

Alessi served as head basketball coach the final 12 seasons (1961-72) for alma mater Yorkville High before consolidation. His best team went 18-3 in 1962 and his 1970 team won an OVAC Class A crown. The '70 team featured Chuck Saus, who would surpass Alessi's career point total.

John Havlicek (Athlete - 1950s)



John Havlicek (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1958) was a three-sport high school honoree for the Bulldogs who later became one of Ohio State's basketball greats and was selected one of the 50 greatest NBA players.

In high school, the 6-5, 180-pounder was a two-time All-OVAC Class AA basketball performer as well as All-0hio Class A. The Bulldogs won the OVAC AA crown in 1958.

An excellent rebounder and passer, he also scored 1,594 career points in 59 games and averaged more than 30 points per game the last two seasons. He led the OVAC in scoring as a junior with a 31.9-point norm, including a school record 53 in a 103-101 overtime win over Cadiz.

He played in the Ohio North-South All-Star game with Jerry Lucas. The two later led Ohio State to three straight NCAA championship games including a title their sophomore season of 1960.

He was an All-Eastern Ohio shortstop on two OVAC championship baseball teams and batted over .400. He also starred in American Legion baseball and later played first base for Ohio State.

In football, the All-OVAC quarterback was recruited by several colleges including Ohio State and West Virginia.

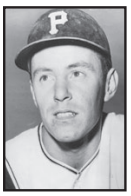
At Ohio State, the Buckeyes were 78-6 during his three varsity basketball seasons and he twice earned All-Big Ten Conference honors.

Havlicek was the No. 1 draft choice of the NBA Boston Celtics and was also selected by the NFL Cleveland Browns even though he never played in college. He played a few exhibition games as a wide receiver with the Browns before reporting to the Celtics, where he would become team captain and have his No. 17 jersey retired.

Nicknamed "Hondo", Havlicek retired in 1978 after 16 NBA seasons including eight Celtic championships. A 13-time All-Star, he is the Celtics' all-time leading scorer (26,395 points) and was the first NBA player to score 1,000 points in 16 consecutive seasons and, when he retired, Havlicek had played more regular season games than anyone in history. His career game averages were 20.8 points, 6.3 rebounds and 4.8 assists.

Besides the Basketball Hall and National High School Hall, he is a member of the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan and Ohio State Halls of Fame.

Bill Mazeroski (Athlete - 1950s)



Bill Mazeroski (Warren Consolidated High School , Class of 1954) is best known for his baseball feats, but the 5-11 basketball center also led the OVAC in scoring with a 27.6 per game average as a senior and was a two-time All-OVAC roundball selection and three-year basketball starter. He earned second team All-Ohio Class A recognition as a senior.

A four-year baseball standout as a shortstop-pitcher, Mazeroski led Warren Consolidated to the 1953 Ohio Class A (largest class) baseball finals before falling, 2-1 to Cincinnati Purcell. Mazeroski pitched a four-hitter in a losing cause.

The athlete, known as "Catfish" as a youth and "Maz" during his pro playing days, led Warren Consolidated to four straight OVAC Ohio-side baseball titles. The team was coached by Al Burazio.

Signed by the Pittsburgh Pirates out of high school and summer, sandlot baseball, the Rush Run native was in the major leagues in 1956 and became a 10-time All-Star second baseman from 1956-72 with the National League team. He won eight of the first 10 second base Gold Glove fielding awards.

He played in 2,163 games and collected 2,016 hits but his best known feat is hitting game seven 1960 World Series winning home run versus the New York Yankees. He still holds some major league fielding records for double plays and assists. The Pirates retired his jersey No. 9.

Mazeroski was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 2001 and also is enshrined in the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall, the Ohio Baseball Hall and the Pennsylvania Sports Hall.

Buckeye Local High School, a consolidation which includes Mazeroski's alma mater, named its high school field in his honor and a section of Route 7 near his Rush Run childhood home north of Tiltonsville is known as "Bill Mazeroski Highway."

Bobby Douglas (Athlete - 1960s)



Bobby Douglas (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1961) was a three-sport high school standout and the first wrestler to win four OVAC individual championships. He became the first black athlete to win an Ohio state mat crown (1959) when he emerged as the 112-pound titlist. He then finished third in the 1960 state tournament and won the 127-pound crown as a senior.

An All-OVAC football player and the conference Class AA captain as a 140-pound running back in 1960, Douglas also as a starter in baseball.

He wrestled two years at West Liberty State College, winning an NAIA championship and placing second in the NCAA. He then transferred to Oklahoma State, where he won the Big Eight Conference 147-pound title. The team never lost a dual meet with Douglas in the lineup and captured a pair of conference titles along with the 1964 NCAA team title.

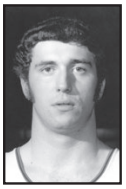
Also as a competitor, he won five national championships and a pair of U.S. Olympic Trials titles. He had a fourth-place featherweight finish at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics and he captained the U.S. freestyle team at the 1968 games in Mexico City. Named the nation's outstanding wrestler in 1970 – the year he retired – Douglas compiled a career record of 303-17-7 (.953). He was runner-up at the World Championships that year.

Still recognized as one of the nation's outstanding wrestling coaches, Douglas has been at the Iowa State University helm for 14 years and became just the fourth Division I mentor to reach the 400-victory plateau in January of 2003. He coached the Cyclones to 10 top-10 at the national finals. He also had runner-up teams in 1996, 2000 and 2002. In 2000, he was selected the National Wrestling Coach of the Year. He has produced six national champions, 17 conference titlists and 25 All-Americans at Iowa State. Before taking over the Cyclones' program, Douglas built a dynasty at Arizona State. From 1975-92, he guided ASU to nine conference title and nine top-10 NCAA team finishes, including the school's first national championship in 1988. While with the Sun Devils, he had three national individual title winners, 37 conference champs and 58 All-Americans.

He was head coach of the 1992 U.S. Olympic freestyle team that competed in Barcelona, Spain. All 10 of his wrestlers placed among the top 10 in their respective weight classes. Douglas has been on the U.S. coaching staff for five other Olympics.

Douglas was inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame, the NAIA Wrestling Hall of Fame, the Ohio Hall of Fame and the Arizona State Hall of Fame.

Allan Hornyak (Athlete - 1960s)



Allan Hornyak (St. John Central High School, Class of 1969) was best known as a record-setting 40-point per game scorer his last two basketball seasons, but the lefthander also was a three-sport standout performer as a football quarterback and first baseman-pitcher in baseball.

A 6-1, 185-pound long-range shooting guard in the era prior to the three-pointer, Hornyak led the OVAC and the state of Ohio in scoring his last two seasons with an all-time OVAC record 42.7 average as a junior plus a 41.95 senior norm.

As a junior, he scored 812 points in 19 games, including 295 goals and 222-of-272 free throws. In his senior year, he tallied 923 points in 22 games with 346 goals and 231-of-296 free throws.

The two-time All-OVAC and All-Ohio cager set the OVAC record of 86 points, including 40 goals, in a 1969 win over Tiltonsville and he scored 61 points the next night against rival Bellaire.

He scored at least 50 points in a game 14 times and ended his 80-game career with a then OVAC record 2,385 points. The Irish won back-to-back OVAC Class AA basketball titles including a 20-2 overall record in 1969.

His scoring efforts resulted in articles in *Sport* magazine, the *New York Times* and *Sports Illustrated* 'Faces in the Crowd.' Hornyak earned *Scholastic Coach* All-America honors and his No. 20 home basketball jersey was retired by the school.

In football, St. John's also won an OVAC crown with a 9-1 record in 1968, with Hornyak as an All-OVAC quarterback. He passed for 14 touchdowns that season.

Recruited for basketball by numerous colleges, he opted for The Ohio State University where he led the Buckeyes in scoring three straight years and earned All-Big Ten Conference honors each year and All-America recognition as a senior.

He left OSU as the school's fourth all-time career scorer with 1,572 points in 69 games and is a member of The Ohio State University Sports Hall of Fame.

Hornyak was the second round pick, and 26th overall, of the NBA's Cleveland Cavaliers. He was also drafted by the ABA Indiana Pacers in the fifth round, but didn't compete in the pro ranks.

Ron 'Fritz' Williams (Athlete - 1960s)



Ron "Fritz" Williams (Weir High, Class of 1964) was a four-year, three-sport standout for the Red Riders. He led Weir to three straight state Class AAA title games including an unbeaten 1962 regular season, two state runner-ups and a state title in 1963 (a three-year record of 62-8). The three-year All-OVAC and All-West Virginia Class AAA basketball player was also an All-OVAC and All-West Virginia football end in 1963 and the OVAC and West Virginia Region 1 sprint champion in the 100, 220 and 440-yard events in 1964.

The 6-3, 185-pound Williams was the first African-American to be named first team All-West Virginia in basketball and only the fourth person in history to be named first team all-state three times. He scored 2,203 career points — then an OVAC 'big school' record —and averaged 30.9 as a senior and 30.1 as a junior. He scored a school-record 55 points against East Liverpool. He was named All-America by *Parade* and *Scholastic Coach* magazines.

Williams was a regular end on the 1961 Class AAA state championship football team and was all-state and *Scholastic Coach* All-America as a senior.

He played on two OVAC Class 3-A title basketball teams (1962 and '64) and the 1962 OVAC track championship squad. The first African-American recruited to play basketball at West Virginia University, he still holds season and career assist records while averaging 20.1 points for his career —sixth best in history and leading the team in scoring and assists three years. Only two WVU players — Jerry West and "Hot Rod" Hundley — combined for more points and assists than Williams, a three-time All-Southern Conference honoree and a second team All-American.

The two-time team captain is a member of the All-Time WVU team (1966-75 era) and has been inducted into the WVU Sports Hall of Fame as well as the West Virginia Sports 'Hall' and the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan 'Hall'. He was the ninth overall NBA draft pick in 1968 by the San Francisco Warriors and was also drafted in the ABA fifth round by the New Orleans Buccaneers. Despite not playing college football, he is one of only two OVAC products to be drafted both by the NBA and NFL (Dallas Cowboys, 14th round).

Williams played eight NBA seasons —five with the Warriors, two with the Milwaukee Bucks and one with the Los Angeles Lakers. He scored 4,797 career points and had 1,818 career assists. He died, at age 59, on April 4, 2004 at his home in California. The road near his Weirton childhood home named 'Ron (Fritz) Williams Boulevard.'

Doug Donley (Athlete - 1970s)



Doug Donley (Cambridge High School, Class of 1977) was a three-sport standout, excelling in football, track and basketball and earning the nickname "White Lightning" for his blazing speed.

On the gridiron, Donley was a three-year letterman at running back for the Bobcats, finishing with a career total of 2,572 rushing yards. He also had 226 yards receiving and 1,028 yards in kick returns for a career all-purpose yardage total of 3,826 yards to go with 31 TDs.

Donley's football accolades included first team All-Ohio Class AAA (1976) by both *The Associated Press* and *United Press International*; Eastern District Class AAA "Player of the Year" (1976); and first team All-OVAC Class 4-A (1976).

In track, Donley won the OVAC Class 4-A championship in the long jump as a junior (1976) with a leap of 21 ft. 2.5 in. and was a double-winner at the conference meet as a senior (1977) - winning the long jump (21-10.75 and the 220-yard dash (22.4 seconds), helping the Bobcats to the OVAC team title.

He earned All-Eastern District in the 100-yard dash and was recognized as a high school All-American in track.

Also a standout in basketball, Donley was hampered by a shoulder injury but still managed to score 10 points per contest and had a school-record 17-assist game.

Widely recruited for football, Donley attended The Ohio State University and earned first team All-Big Ten and honorable mention All-America accolades at wide receiver (1980). He ranks among the Buckeyes' all-time leading receivers in several categories, including career yards per catch (21.2, second); yardage (2,252, fourth); touchdowns (16, fifth); and receptions (106, tied for ninth). He led the team in receptions from 1978-80.

Donley was a second round draft choice of the Dallas Cowboys in 1981, playing four years in the NFL. He caught 55 passes for 898 yards and four TDs.

Inducted into the Cambridge High School Hall of Fame, Donley is president of Advantage Golf Tournament Services in Addison, Texas.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Tim Spencer (Athlete - 1970s)



Tim Spencer (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 1979) ranks with the greatest running backs ever to grace Ohio Valley high school gridirons. Spencer — who plied his trade for legendary coach George Strager — rushed for some 3,144 yards and 50 touchdowns. He scored 338 points during his Red Devil grid career.

As a senior, the *Parade* All-American gained 1,670 yards and scored 28 touchdowns while his junior numbers totaled 1,280 rushing yards and 18 touchdowns. Spencer's top prep game came as a senior when he rushed for 306 yards and scored six touchdowns against Martins Ferry. All told, he scored 40 points in that contest.

He was awarded All-OVAC and All-Ohio football honors following his junior and senior seasons.

Spencer also played basketball and ran track for the Red Devils, excelling in the 100- and 200-meters.

After his prep days, Spencer matriculated to Columbus to play for Coach Earle Bruce's Ohio State Buckeyes.

The 6-1, 210-pounder was a three-year starter for the Buckeyes. He finished his career with 3,553 yards which still ranks third on Ohio State's all-time rushing charts.

Spencer led the Big Ten in rushing as a senior with 1,371 yards, eighth best in the nation. He was accorded All-Big Ten honors twice and was a second-team UPI All-American selection as a senior.

He served as the Buckeyes' co-captain as a senior and was voted the team MVP that year. He was also named MVP of the Holiday Bowl as he rushed for 167 yards and two TDs in OSU's 47-17 win.

Spencer was the second player selected in the United States Football League (USFL) draft by the Chicago Blitz. After a three-year USFL stint, he signed with the San Diego Chargers where he started for four years at fullback.

He gained more than 5,000 rushing yards and scored 45 touchdowns as a professional.

Spencer served as Ohio State's running backs coach from 1994 through the 2003 season. He left the Buckeyes for an assistant's role with the Chicago Bears.

Amy Gamble (Athlete - 1980s)



Amy Gamble (John Marshall High School, Class of 1982) is one of the Ohio Valley's greatest female athletes of all time. Gamble excelled in three sports – basketball, track and women's handball.

She became Marshall County's first Olympian when she competed with the U.S. Women's Handball Team in the 1988 Games held in Seoul, Korea. Earlier, the U.S. Women were crowned as champions of the Pan American Games.

Gamble was selected as the West Virginia Women's Basketball Player of the Year in 1982 after leading John Marshall to the state Class AAA championship. She averaged 23 points and 18 rebounds on a 22-1 record team which avenged its only loss by defeating Elkins in the state finals. Captain of the All-State Team, Gamble was a two-time Class AAA first-team honoree. She was chosen All-OVAC and All-Valley three straight years.

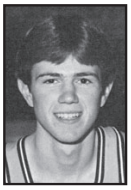
She was the first JMHS girls' basketball performer to score more than 1,000 points and the initial Monarch athlete to have her jersey retired. She scored 1,498 career points. Gamble was ranked as the No. 4 girls' basketball player in the country her senior season when was named to the *Parade, Street & Smith* and *USA Today* All-American teams.

Recruited by Tennessee, she played as a backup on the 1983 Lady Vols' squad that finished as the NCAA tournament runners-up, losing to the Cheryl Miller-led Southern Cal powerhouse. She left Tennessee at the end of that season and transferred to West Virginia University but played just one season before deciding to try team handball.

After her appearance in the Olympics, Gamble returned to basketball and enrolled at the University of Arizona. Despite having just one season of eligibility remaining, Gamble was the team's leading scorer and she earned Pacific-10 Conference player of the week laurels.

Her high school track career was also brilliant, as Gamble set numerous invitational meet and OVAC records in the shot put and the discus. She established all-time OVAC standards in both events and was a West Virginia state champion in both events. She was a three-time All-Valley honoree.

Mitch Hannahs (Athlete - 1980s)



Mitch Hannahs (Skyvue High School, Class of 1985) was the epitome of a winner in high school as the two-sport, four-year letterman sparked the tiny Golden Hawks to the state tournament in both basketball and baseball.

In basketball, Skyvue made the OHSAA state tournament in Hannahs' junior and senior seasons, finishing as the Class A runner-up in 1984-85. He was selected first team All-Ohio as a senior and second team as a junior and was a two-time first team All-Eastern District, All-OVAC and All-Pioneer Valley Conference honoree. He also participated in the Ohio North-South All-Star classic following a senior season where the 5-10 guard averaged more than 22 points per game.

In baseball, the consistent-hitting and sure-handed shortstop helped the Hawks to the Ohio Class A state championship as a senior (1985) as well as the OVAC and PVC titles. He earned first team All-Ohio, All-Eastern District, All-OVAC and All-PVC honors and was selected for the Ohio Baseball All-Star Series.

He also received All-Eastern District, All-OVAC and All-PVC accolades following his sophomore (1983) and junior (1984) seasons.

After graduation Hannahs pulled off a rare "double" when his college team - Indiana State University - advanced to the NCAA Division I College World Series in 1986 and that same season, he played for the Maynard Post 666 team which advanced to the American Legion World Series. Hannahs was voted MVP of the regional tournament that season and won the Louisville Slugger Award for the highest batting average in tournament play.

At Indiana State, Hannahs was a three-time All-Missouri Valley Conference performer (1987-89) and was an NCAA Division I All-American following his senior year (1989).

He was a 16th round draft pick of the Milwaukee Brewers, playing in their farm system from 1989-93. Hannahs is currently athletic director and head baseball coach at Lincoln Trail College in Robinson, Illinois. He previously coached for seven years at his alma mater - Indiana State University.

Vicki Pullie (Athlete - 1980s)



Vicki Pullie-Stokes (Wellsville High School, Class of 1987) is believed by many Wellsville residents to be one of the greatest athletes in the school's history, attested to by her induction as a member of Wellsville High School's Athletic of Fame inaugural Class of 2004.

During her high school career, Pullie-Stokes collected 15 first-place finishes at the annual Cal Giffin OVAC Track Championships and she was selected as the area "Track Athlete of the Year" three times. She also earned both All-Valley and All-Eastern District laurels four times each. She was a two-time long jump champion at the Ohio high school state meet and was a runner-up in the 200 meters.

In volleyball, she was twice selected as the team MVP and earned All-Area (three times), All-Eastern District (twice), and All-OVAC (twice). Three times she was named to the All-Columbiana County team.

In basketball, she led the 1987 Lady Tigers to the state finals. Her 27-1 record Wellsville team ended one of the nation's longest basketball streaks at 108 when the Tigers defeated West Holmes in tournament play. She scored more than 1,400 points and collected more than PP 800 rebounds while helping the Tigers to a three-year record of 66-8. Pullie-Stokes was chosen OVAC "Player of the Year" that season and was a two-time All-Ohio honoree. She also earned All-Valley and All-Area recognition three times each on the hardwood.

All told, she won 11 varsity letters and was selected as the American Legion 1987 Ohio State "Athlete of the Year". She went on to play collegiate basketball at Ohio State and was a member of the 1989 Buckeyes' squad that won the Big Ten Conference championship. She gained personal honors when in 1990 she was selected as Ohio State's best defensive player, team MVP and Big Ten honorable mention. Twice, she was designated as the conference's player of the week.

Additionally, Pullie earned a gold medal with the North Team in the 1989 U.S. Olympic Festival, held in Norman, Okla.

Geno Ford (Athlete - 1990s)



Geno Ford (Cambridge High School, Class of 1993) achieved the ultimate honor of a high school basketball player in the state of Ohio when he was selected "Mr. Basketball" following his senior season.

The 5-8 sharpshooter finished a stellar four-year career with the Bobcats as Ohio's second all-time leading scorer with 2,680 points which also stands as the OVAC's all-time high-water mark.

Ford's name also appears in the OHSAA record book in the following categories: 288 free throws made in a season (1991-92), first all-time; 697 free throws made in a career (1989-93), first all-time; and 928 points in a season (1991-92), seventh all-time.

Playing for his father, highly-successful Cambridge coach Gene Ford, Geno earned All-Ohio Division II first team accolades following both his junior and senior seasons. He was also a two-time All-Eastern District Division II "Player of the Year" and two-time All-OVAC Class 4-A first team pick.

Ford went on to become a four-year letterman at Ohio University, earning All-Mid American Conference second team honors as a junior (1996) and first team plaudits as a senior (1997). He is the fifth all-time leading scorer at OU with 1,752 points. One of the most popular players at OU, Ford helped the Bobcats to one NCAA and one NIT appearance during his career.

Following graduation, he served as a graduate assistant (1998-99) and assistant coach (1999-2001) at Ohio University; was head coach for one season at Division II Shawnee State University (2001-02), leading his team to a 22-10 record and earning American Mideast Conference "Coach of the Year" honors: served as an assistant coach at Kent State University since the 2002-03 season.

Stephanie Petho (Athlete - 1990s)



Stephanie Petho (St. John Central, Class of 1992) remains the measuring stick for female basketball greatness in the OVAC.

The Fighting Irish three-sports luminary re-wrote the St. John Central and OVAC scoring books during her career on Guernsey Street. The 5-7 sharpshooter finished her four-year career with 2,667 points which is first in conference annals and still ranks sixth in the state of Ohio.

Petho was accorded first-team All-OVAC all four years. The Bellaire native earned All-Ohio honors three years, culminating by being named the state's Division IV "Player of the Year" following a season in which she averaged a staggering 37.1 points a game.

As a junior, she tallied 35.9 points per game in leading her Lady Irish teammates to a 22-3 record a berth in the OHSAA regional tournament. She was named first team All-Ohio after scoring 910 points that winter alone. Petho twice cracked the 50-point plateau in a game, scoring 57 against Shadyside and 56 against Toronto.

The two-year starter at the University of Pittsburgh carried St. John Central to four OVAC championships in basketball and an overall 75-16 record. Petho was no one-sport wonder, also starring in volleyball and track during her prep career. She earned All-OVAC in volleyball her junior and senior years.

In track, Petho is one of the valley's all-time great throwers, earning five OVAC gold medals in the weight events — three in the discus and two in the shot put. Petho tossed the platter a school-record 121-7 en route to a regional championship and a third-place showing in the state meet as a junior.

She capped her high school career by being named co-valedictorian of her senior class and she went on to become an Academic All-American at Pitt. While there, she led the team in scoring in the 1994-95 season, became the career free throw percentage leader (81.4) and is 14th on the all-time scoring list.

OHIO VALLEY ATHLETIC CONFERENCE — FOUNDED 1943 — O V A C

Class of 2005

OVAC Hall of Fame

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Rudy Mumley (OVAC 'Family')



Rudy Mumley (Wheeling High School, Class of 1936). If Rudy Mumley's heart was measured by the size of his love for his fellow men and women, it never could have fit inside his body.

Mumley, an educator, administrator, humanitarian, dynamic organizer and charity fund-raiser, served the OVAC and the rest of Ohio Valley in many different, but special ways. He was a two-time president, charter member of the conference's Foundation Board, served on the football and basketball committees and was the organizer and long-time game director of the Ohio-West Virginia Charity Football Classic. The mid-summer all-star football clash was renamed in his honor in 1986. He also served as OVAC president during the 1967-68 school year. To help the game get off the ground, Mumley once mortgaged his home to achieve the financing needed for the inaugural OVAC-sponsored contest in 1972. He also was a great supporter of the OVAC wrestling tournament.

A graduate of old Wheeling High School and West Liberty State College with a master's degree from WVU, Mumley served in the Air Force during World War II and was recalled during the Korean conflict. He taught at Powhatan, Shadyside and Smithfield High Schools before being appointed principal at Warren Consolidated High in Tiltonsville in 1964. Rudy later served as principal at Yorkville High. Later, when the Buckeye Local School District was formed, he became principal at Buckeye South and remained there until his retirement in 1979.

Mumley, who was born in 1918 and died in 1999, also provided great service to the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club and his college alma mater, West Liberty State. Rudy was a member of the Dapper Dan Board of Directors for some 25 years and was banquet co-chairman six times. At West Liberty, he earned a rare honor as a non-athlete when he was inducted into the school's Athletic Hall of Fame in 1985. He was president of the Hilltoppers' Alumni Association and the Foundation. Among the numerous honors he received include: the Robert McKelvey Award and Man of the Year honors from the Dapper Dan Club; WLSC Gold and Black Achievement Award and the College President's Award, along with the Warwood Lions Club's Citizen of the Year Award in 1981.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Agnes Timmons (OVAC 'Family')



Agnes Timmons (Scio High School, Class of 1942). This Octogenarian started coaching pickup girls' basketball teams at Barnesville High School in 1946 when there were no school-sanctioned girls' programs for member schools of the OVAC. She was a girls' physical education teacher at the time, after having graduated from Denison University in Granville, Ohio.

Timmons considered it part of her job as a phys ed teacher to organize whatever athletic teams she could because she wanted the girls to have some competition and experience the fun of playing organized sports. She would join with teachers from other schools in the area interested in doing the same thing to schedule games. They also had to hire their own officials and provide transportation to the game sites.

Timmons left teaching after 1948 to begin raising a family. After having four children, she returned to her teaching and coaching career at Barnesville in 1962. Timmons coached volleyball and basketball even though it wasn't until June of 1972 that Title IX was enacted, demanding equal sports opportunities for girls. She was asked by then OVAC executive secretary Sam Mumley to host and serve as director of the first conference volleyball championship tournament which was held at Barnesville High. Timmons coached basketball and track until well into the 1980's, but continued her duties with the volleyball team until her retirement from teaching in 1991, She also coached softball for one year when her daughter played because the talented youth also wanted to compete as a member of the track and field team. The school district would only permit that to happen if Timmons coached both sports, which she did.

Even today, Timmons remains close to the Barnesville athletic program. Through this past season, she served as the announcer for the Shamrocks' boys and girls basketball games, as well as for the home volleyball matches. She also has been the announcer and part of the committee for the OVAC volleyball tournament for over 30 years. Last winter, the then 80-year-old Timmons was called back into the coaching ranks when Barnesville needed someone to help out with the volleyball squad. Agnes coached the jayvees and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Her track teams were perennial contenders for OVAC titles and several volleyball teams advanced to the district.

Doug Huff (Media)



Doug Huff (Magnolia High School, Class of 1961). This native of New Martinsville has been writing sports since the age of 12, his first "job" being with the *Wetzel Democrat*, a weekly paper in his home town. Huff joined *The Intelligencer* as associate sports editor in 1967, a position he held until 1978 when he was named as that paper's sports editor, remaining in that position until his retirement in 1999. He previously was sports editor of the *Fairmont Times* and worked on the sports staff of the Dominion News in Morgantown.

While the sports chief of *The Intelligencer*, Huff originated All-Valley Boys Basketball and Baseball selections in 1968, plus the OV All-Sports School and Athlete Awards and the All-OV Scholar-Athlete selections. He compiled Ohio Valley and West Virginia records for football, basketball and baseball, along with historical material on OVAC schools, coaches and athletes. Since 1979, he has been the Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the W.Va. Sports Writers Association after having previously served as the president and football all-state board chairman. Huff also is on the Board of Directors of the Football Writers Association of America and the National Sportscasters & Sports Writers Association.

Among the numerous honors he has achieved include: induction into the National High School Sports Hall of Fame (1999); state sports writer of the year nine times; West Virginia University School of Journalism P.I. Reed Life Achievement Award (1999); Magnolia High School Athletic Boosters Life Achievement Award (1990); W.Va. Sports Writers Association Gene Morehouse Award (1992); Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club's Robert McKelvey Award (1994).

He is the author of Sports in West Virginia, "A Pictorial History" (1979) and also of the National High School Football and Basketball Record Books (2001-2002). Doug also co-authored "How to Watch Sports on TV...And Enjoy It." Since 1975, he has been a high school contributing editor of Street and Smith magazine and compiles their pre-season schoolboy All-America teams for football, boys' basketball and baseball. Although retired from The Intell, he continues to submit a much-read and enjoyed weekly column. Doug also serves as the national rankings and records editor for Student Sports Inc., and coordinates football and boys basketball selections for Parade and EA Sports.

Bob Burton (Coaches)



Robert W. (Bob) Burton (Magnolia High School, Class of 1957) coached several sports at Paden City High School, but is most remember for a sparkling 38-year career as head boys' basketball coach (1963-2001) where he amassed a record of 554-327.

During his tenure, the Wildcats won 21 sectional championships; eight regional titles; finished as state runner-up twice (1972 and '82) and captured the West Virginia Class A championship twice (1973 and '87). Paden City had 28 winning seasons under Burton, including nine 20-win campaigns, and won five OVAC Class A championships (1971, '75, '92, '93 and '94).

Burton received the West Virginia "Coach of the Year" honor in 1986 and was selected to coach in the OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic several times as well as the West Virginia North-South All-Star Game in 1987. He was a member of the West Virginia Basketball Coaches Association, the State Coaches Committee and the OVAC Basketball Committee.

Burton also served as an assistant coach in football at Paden City for 18 years, serving on the Wildcats' staff during two state championship seasons (1970 and '79); coached track for more than 30 years, winning several OVAC Class A and Intra-State League championships; coached cross country for two years and golf for one season; was assistant baseball coach for three years; and spent more than a decade as athletic director.

As an athlete, Burton was a three-sport athlete at Magnolia, earning all-West Virginia honors in football in 1955. At the college level, he was also a three-sport performer, playing football at Kent State University and then football, basketball and tennis after transferring to West Liberty State College where he graduated in 1961. He then received a master's degree in education from West Virginia University in 1968.

George Strager (Coaches)



George Strager (McKeesport, Pa. High School, Class of 1943) has often been called the "dean" of Ohio Valley high school football coaches thanks to a highly-successful career that spanned some 38 years (1950-87) at five different schools. He posted a career coaching record of 246 wins, 115 losses and 15 ties which stood as the all-time valley record until eclipsed in 2004 by Jay Circosta of Woodsfield/Monroe Central.

Strager's coaching career began in 1950 at tiny Sistersville High School, compiling a 42-22-3 record in seven seasons there and leading the Tigers to the West Virginia Class A state championship in 1953. He moved on to Clarksburg Notre Dame High for four years as head football and basketball coach (1957-60), going 24-10 on the gridiron and leading the basketball team to the West Virginia Class A state semifinals. Next came a three-year stint at Wheeling Central Catholic (1961-63) which featured two undefeated regular seasons and a mark of 21-9-1. The 1962 team lost to Charleston Catholic in the inaugural West Virginia Catholic State Championship game, but the next year Strager's team avenged that loss to win the crown. Up next was a five-year stay at Cambridge High (1964-68), posting a 25-23-2 record.

He then began a legendary 19-year run at St. Clairsville High in 1969, turning his trademark "belly series" to a record of 134-51-9 there. His Red Devil teams posted three undefeated seasons (1969, '77 and '85) and the 1983 squad earned the school's first-ever trip to the OHSAA playoffs and the 1986 team advanced to the state semifinals before losing a heart-breaker to Chagrin Falls Kenston.

Strager's top honors included induction into the Ohio High School Football Coaches Hall of Fame in 1998; Ohio Valley Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame in1991; selection as OVAC Coach of the Year in 1979 and '87; and recognition by the Dapper Dan Club of the Upper Ohio Valley in 1992. He also coached in the OVAC All-Star Charity Football Classic twice (1972 and '87).

A graduate of Salem College, Strager passed away in 1990, but his memory lives on in the form of the George Strager Memorial Football Camp and Scholarship Program as well as the "George Strager Evening with the Stars" dinner held in conjunction with the OVAC Charity All-Star Football Classic.

John 'Corky' Vrotsos (Coaches)



John "Corky" Vrotsos (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1946) not only initiated the sport of wrestling at his alma mater, he quickly established himself as one of the premier mat coaches in conference history.

Vrotsos guided the Purple Rider grapplers from 1957-68, leading his team to seven consecutive OVAC Tournament championships (1961-67) along with six straight Ohio District Tournament titles. His teams finished ranked in the top 10 in the state four times (1959, '60, '63 and '64) and the best finish at the state tournament was a fifth place effort in 1960.

During his tenure, Vrotsos coached 41 OVAC champions and 41 Ohio State Tournament qualifiers, including 10 state place-winners and one state champion (175-pounder John Scordos in 1964). Ferry's dual meet record during the Vrotsos years was 85-20-1, including unbeaten seasons in 1964 and '67.

The initial inductee into the Martins Ferry High School Wrestling Hall of Fame in 1994 and the 1978 recipient of the OVAC Wrestling Tournament's "Mr. Mat. Award", he served as tournament director for the OVAC, sectional and district tournaments after yielding the coaching post.

In addition to serving as head wrestling coach, Vrotsos was also an assistant in football and track for the Purple Riders. He was on the football staff during Ferry's run of three consecutive undefeated seasons (1959-61) and four OVAC championships (also 1963).

As an athlete, he was a three-year letterman in football and basketball at Martins Ferry. In football, he was a center-linebacker under legendary coach Fred Thomas, playing center and linebacker on the 1944 and '45 OVAC championship squads, earning all-conference "AA" honors as a senior. He played guard in basketball under coaches Floyd Baker and Ralph Gartrell. After serving in the army, Vrotsos then attended West Liberty State College, graduating in 1951. He was a three-year varsity football player for the Hill toppers and a member of two undefeated teams that played in bowl games. (Smokey Mountain Bowl and Pythian Bowl).

Chester Grossi (Officials)



Chester Grossi (Weir High School, Class of 1940) began officiating in 1942, claiming to be "drafted" into officiating by fellow honoree Walter Heil because many officials had been lost due to the military draft.

His love of sports saw him enter the world of officiating, not only in football, but also in basketball and baseball. He retired from officiating in 1987 after 45 years. During those year, he worked many district and regional tournament games as well as 14 state tournaments in basketball and 12 state finals in football. He also worked several West Virginia Catholic State basketball and football playoff games as well as games in the West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference and the United Football League. He is a life member of the Ohio Valley Board of Officials and the West Virginia Football and Basketball Officials' Association. He was the 1997 recipient of the OVAC's Robert Dawson Officials' Award and was honored by the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club.

As an athlete at Weir, Grossi played football for coach Carl Hamill from 1936-39 and during that time, the Red riders won 27 straight games. He received a football scholarship to West Liberty State College where he played for Coach Joe Bartell in 1941 and after World War II.

He graduated from West Liberty with a bachelor's degree in political science, returning to Weir High School as a teacher and assistant coach. He left the education field to enter into the investment and insurance business in 1960. He remains active in many civic, fraternal and service organizations. He is president of the Weirtonian Lodge of the Italian Sons and Daughters of America, serves on the Board of Directors of the Fraternal Association and is an honorary national president of ISDA; a member of the board of the Upper Ohio Valley Italian Heritage Festival; the Weirton Council 3734 Knights of Columbus and an officer of their Fourth Degree; a life member of Post 10 of the American Legion; board member of Camp Fire USA; the Weirton Elks; and is a member of the West Liberty State College Foundation's Finance Committee, Hall of Fame Committee, Hilltoppers Athletic Club and a life member of the Alumni Association.

He was inducted into the West Liberty State College Hall of Fame and was honored by the West Virginia Northern

Walter Heil (Officials)



Walter Heil (Bellaire High, Class of 1923) was regarded as one of the deans of Ohio Valley officiating thanks to a career that spanned some 38 years and involved three sports.

He began as a baseball umpire in 1926 then added football in 1928 and basketball in 1929, working countless games until finally hanging up his whistle at the age of 62.

Heil officiated football and basketball at the high school, collegiate and professional levels. He worked five West Virginia High School State Tournaments, five West Virginia Catholic High School State Tournaments and three West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Tournaments. He also officiated in the semi-pro Continental Football League, which featured the Wheeling Ironmen.

He was a member of the Ohio Valley Board of Officials, the West Virginia Officials Association and the International Association of Approved Basketball officials and was

honored for length of service by each of these organizations.

After retiring as an active official, Heil assumed the role of commissioner of both basketball and football officials for the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference, a position he held from 1965-70.

He was a charter member of the Bellaire High Athletic Wall of Fame and the 1998 recipient of the OVAC's Robert Dawson Officials' Award.

Heil worked for Weirton Steel Corporation and was a resident of Yorkville until his death in 1970.

Alex Groza (Athlete - 1940s)



Alex Groza (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1944). This 6-foot-7, 220-pounder led the Purple Riders to two straight undefeated regular seasons in basketball and to the Ohio state tournament both years. Martins Ferry finished 24-1 in 1943 and 26-1 the following season. The Purple Riders won the first OVAC Class AA basketball championship in 1944 as Groza scored a valley record 628 points (a mark later broken by 2004 OVAC Hall of Fame inductee Ken Alessi). Groza scored 41 vs. Tiltonsville. He was an all-conference and all-Ohio first-team selection.

Alex was the top scorer and rebounder on the University of Kentucky's "Fabulous Five," which won back-to-back NCAA titles in 1948 and '49, with Groza being named the tournament MVP both years. He was a three-time all-Southeastern Conference choice and a two-time consensus All-American. He set 22 individual SEC records. Groza still ranks seventh on Kentucky's all-time scoring list with 1,744 points. Alex's jersey number (15) was retired by the school. Groza and four of his UK teammates — Ralph Beard, Wallace Jones, Cliff Barker and Kenny Rollins — won a gold medal as U.S. Olympians at the London Games in 1948. Groza, in 1949, was named the Helms Foundation Basketball Player of the Year. In a 1950 Associated Press nationwide poll of sports writers selecting the leading athletes of the half-century, Alex was chosen as one of the five top-rated basketball players.

In the NBA, Groza averaged 22.5 points in 130 pro games with the Indianapolis Olympians in 1950 and '51. He coached Bellarmine (Ky.) College from 1959 through 1966. The school had never won a basketball championship before Groza's tenure. He led the Knights to the Kentucky Intercollegiate Athletic Conference regular season and tournament title in 1963, after which he was named the league coach of the year.

Groza later served as business manager and then assistant to the president of the ABA's Kentucky Colonels before becoming general manager of the San Diego Conquistadors until the franchise folded. He then served as GM of a professional volleyball team for one year before joining Reynolds Metals in 1977 as a regional sales manager.

Groza died of lung cancer at his home in San Diego on January 21, 1995.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Chuck Howley (Athlete - 1950s)



Charles L. "Chuck" Howley (Warwood High School, Class of 1954) was a first team all-West Virginia and all-OVAC tackle in 1953. He lettered in football, basketball and baseball. As a teenager, he also competed for an independent All-America boys gymnastics group.

The West Virginia University graduate is still the only Mountaineer athlete to letter in five sports — football, gymnastics, wrestling, track and swimming. In football he played guard, center, and linebacker while earning All-Southern Conference laurels three straight years. Also the long snapper on special teams, Howley was selected as a third-team All-American his senior year. Howley, at 6-2, 220 pounds, was considered to be one of the fastest linemen in WVU history. He started in three college all-star games — East-West Shrine Game, Senior Bowl and the College Football All-Star Game. He lettered for the Mountaineers on the trampoline in gymnastics, a heavyweight in wrestling, sprinter and weightman in track and a diver in swimming. In 1957, Howley was selected as the West Virginia Amateur Athlete of the Year.

He was an NFL first-round draft choice (1958) of the Chicago Bears — only the third Mountaineer selected in the opening round. He played a year and a half in Chicago before being sidelined by a serious knee injury. Howley was back home in Wheeling working at a gas station in 1961 when the expansion Dallas Cowboys traded two draft picks for him. The ex-Bear decided to give it one more try and wound up starting at outside linebacker 12 years for the Cowboys, earning all-pro laurels six times. He starred in two Super Bowls. The 1971 game saw Howley intercept two passes and recover a fumble to earn MVP honors in a 16-13 loss to the Baltimore Colts. He remains the only player on a losing team to be selected as the Super Bowl's most valuable player. In 1972, he helped the Cowboys win Super Bowl VI over the Miami Dolphins by intercepting a Bob Griese pass to set up a touchdown.

Howley is a member of the West Virginia Sports Writers Association, WVU, Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club and City of Wheeling halls of fame.

Dick Miller (Athlete - 1950s)



Dick Miller (Wheeling Central Catholic High School, Class 1952) was a first-team all-state and all-OVAC performer in basketball three straight years while performing for the Maroon Knights. Miller led Central Catholic to the conference and West Virginia Catholic championships all three seasons, scoring 1,593 points during a stellar high school career. His three-year scoring average was 21.4 points per game. His career point total stood for 51 years until it was bested by David Contraguerro, a four-year letterman for the Maroon Knights. Contraguerro's record was later toppled by a Central girls' basketball great, Kayleen Fitzsimmons. Miller also had a game high of 30 points in a West Virginia-Kentucky All-Star Game, leading the Mountaineer team to an 81-80 victory at Williamson. Twice, (1951 and '52), Miller was chosen as the state's basketball player of the year. He also was a standout performer in football and baseball in high school. He was a "T" formation quarterback as a football performer and a shortstop/pitcher on the baseball team.

Recruited by the University of Wisconsin on a basketball scholarship, Miller was the Badgers' starting point guard for two years. Nicknamed "The Cat" because of his quickness, Dick averaged 19 points per game in Big Ten play, topping the 30-point mark three times during his career. In 1956, he set a conference record for the most consecutive free throws made, converting 29 in a row over two consecutive games. Miller also excelled as a floor leader and defensive player. He was voted as the team MVP his senior year. Although drafted by the New York Knicks in 1956, Miller chose to play AAU basketball. He was voted to the AAU All-America team after participating in the National Tournament held in Denver where he led the Milwaukee Allen Bradley Team to a fourth place finish. Miller played two seasons with the Phillips Oilers in the National Industrial Basketball League and one season in the Tidewater Basketball Association where he averaged 22 points per game and was voted the league's MVP for the 1962-63 season.

Miller played baseball one year at Wisconsin, hitting .333 and playing second base. Because a shoulder injury in high school limited his throwing ability, he gave up baseball after one season to concentrate on basketball.

His athletic career then continued in a different sport as he took up handball (four-wall) and in his first year, he won the North and South Carolina Open Singles Championship. He went on to win numerous singles titles throughout the Southeast, including two national singles age group championships. He finally ended his competitive career in 1996 at the age of 62.

Mike Sherwood (Athlete - 1960s)



Mike Sherwood (Bellaire High School, Class of 1967). This soft-spoken athletic great rates with Bellaire High's all-time stalwarts in both football and basketball.

He quarterbacked the 1966 Big Reds to a 9-1 season as a senior for coach Don Ault. It remains arguably one of the best prep grid teams in Ohio Valley history. Sherwood led the OVAC with 20 TD passes that fall as he completed 73 of 110 passes for a 66.4 percentage and amassed more than 1,400 yards with only four interceptions.

He was just as impressive on the hardwood for legendary coach Claire Cribbs. The sweet-shooting 6-1 guard was a two-year starter for the Big Reds and surpassed the 1,000-point plateau while earning All-Ohio honors. He averaged 25.3 points a game in leading the Big Reds to a 17-4 record. As a junior, he averaged 25 points per game. He poured in a career-high, and school-record, 59 points against Guernsey Street rival St. John Central. He was also selected for the Ohio North-South Basketball Classic.

Following his illustrious prep career, Sherwood accepted a football scholarship to West Virginia University, where his father earlier played. After competing on the freshman team, he started at quarterback for three seasons. As a sophomore, he passed for some 2,000 yards while establishing a school record with 416 yards against rival Pitt, completing 27 of 37 passes. He finished the year ranked 11th in the nation, averaging 198 passing yards a game. The Mountaineers went 7-3 that fall. Sherwood led the Mountaineers to a 25-7 record in his three years, including a 10-1 mark and a Peach Bowl win his senior season. He still ranks among WVU career leaders in total offense, passing yards, pass completions and attempts, TD passes, passing efficiency and completion percentage. He was selected to play in the 1970 Blue-Gray Game and won the Ira E. Rodgers Award the same year. Sherwood was also selected All-East by UPI in 1970. A member of the All-Time WVU 1950-69 Era team, Sherwood was inducted into the WVU Sports Hall of Fame in 1997.

After graduation, he stayed on at WVU and was a graduate assistant for Bobby Bowden and Frank Cignetti. He went to Bethany College to serve as offensive coordinator from 1974-78 under his high school coach, Don Ault. Sherwood returned to his prep alma mater, serving as the Big Reds' head coach from 1980-84, registering a 26-12-2 record. He was named Eastern District Coach of the Year in 1982. He became the school's athletic director in 1984 and is currently the high school principal.

Terry Snively (Athlete - 1960s)



Terry Snively (Powhatan High School, 1966). This all-round athlete starred in four sports for the Indians. He established an Ohio Valley football modern single season record by amassing 222 points, including 35 touchdowns, his senior season. The quick-footed running back finished with 398 career points. Snively was named Ohio's UPI Class A Back of the Year in 1965. He was an All-OVAC honoree as a junior and senior while garnering All-Eastern Ohio and All-Valley laurels.

Captain of the Indians' football, baseball and track teams. He also was a four-year letterman in basketball, starting his last three seasons. Snively averaged better than 24 points a game in each of his final two seasons and finished his career with 1,146 points. He was third team All-Ohio as a senior and first team All-OVAC as a junior and senior.

Springtime at Powhatan saw Snively do double duty, starring in baseball and track. He was a talented pitcher and outfielder in the diamond sport for four years. He helped the Indians to a pair of Ohio state tournament berths, including winning the state Class A crown in his freshman season when he batted .315 as leadoff hitter. Powhatan High launched a track program in his sophomore season. He was the OVAC 100-yard, 200-yard and long jump champion as a junior and qualified for the state meet in the 100. He holds the school records in the 100 (10.2), 200 (23.4) and long jump (19-5).

After his storied four-sport prep career, he accepted a football scholarship to West Virginia University, where he was an impact player in the defensive backfield as a three-year starter. He was selected to the All-Time WVU 1950-69 Era team.

After earning his WVU diploma, he opted to remain in athletics in his native Ohio Valley. Snively cut his coaching teeth at Bellaire High. During his six-year stint with the Big Reds, he was a football aide to Jake Olsavsky and served as head basketball and baseball coach for five years. He led Bellaire to a pair of sectional crowns in hoops while gaining a district title (1974) and OVAC championship (1976) in baseball. Snively matriculated to Shadyside High as head basketball coach for two years. His 1976-77 team won a district title and OVAC crown. In that season, he was named district coach of the year. Snively left Tigertown for River High, where he served as head football coach for 25 seasons. During that quarter of a century, his 1997 team went 10-0 and won an OVAC title while his teams made the Ohio playoffs in 1993 and 1997. Snively coached in the OVAC All-Star Game twice while also coaching the Ohio North-South Game in 1994. In 2004, Snively received the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Carl Hamill Award.

John 'Fuzzy' Filliez (Athlete - 1970s)



John Filliez (Magnolia High School, 1973). The first OVAC athlete to earn All-W. Va. first team honors in football, basketball and baseball also set an NCAA pass receiving record at Marshall University.

Nicknamed "Fuzzy" because of his bushy red hair, the Blue Eagles' wide receiver-defensive back led the Ohio Valley in pass receiving yards his last two seasons and ended his career with 81 catches for 1,434 yards and 16 touchdowns in regular season play. In his senior season, Magnolia went 10-2 with a state Class AA runnerup finish to Ravenswood.

He teamed with Magnolia's all-state quarterback Brian Book to lead the W. Va. All-Stars to a victory over Ohio in the annual OVAC All-Star game at Wheeling Island.

In basketball, the guard averaged 19 points a game and earned all-state honors after the Blue Eagles were state "AA" runnerup to Gary.

In baseball, the outfielder batted .352 and completed his all-star trifecta with All-Valley, and all-state honors in three sports.

Recruited for football by Marshall, West Virginia, Virginia Tech, Pitt and Penn State, the 5-11, 175-pounder signed early with WVU, but opted for Marshall where he led the Thundering Herd in pass receiving for four straight years and set school records with 168 catches for 1,954 yards and 14 TDs. His reception total ranked, at the time, eighth among all-time NCAA Division I receivers. Starting four years, he set a then-NCAA record by catching passes in 42 straight games. He broke the mark set by Heisman Trophy winner Johnny Rodgers from Nebraska. Automobile bumper stickers supporting the police showed up at Herd games, where they had a different meaning. They read: "I Love the Fuzz." The team co-captain was a two-time All-America honorable mention choice and a first team National Independent All-Star honoree.

Filliez also was selected as the state Amateur Athlete of the Year in 1976. In 1985, he was inducted into the Marshall Athletic Hall of Fame. Filliez currently resides in Delaware, Ohio.

Lance Mehl (Athlete - 1970s)



Lance Mehl (Bellaire High School, Class of 1976). A three-sport team captain for the Big Reds, Mehl was also an All-Valley football linebacker and baseball first baseman as well as a center in basketball.

He earned All-Ohio football honors for coach Jake Olsavsky while serving as co-captain of the 1975 team which went 9-1. He played in the Ohio North-South game in Columbus and turned in a sparkling defensive effort for the South all-stars.

Recruited by Penn State University for football, he was cited by coach Joe Paterno and defensive coordinator Jerry Sandusky as "one of the best inside linebackers" ever to play for 'Linebacker U'.

Mehl was the leading tackler for the unbeaten 1978 Nittany Lion team which bowed to Alabama, 14-7 in the Sugar Bowl and probably cost PSU from being declared national champion. In that game, he led Lion defenders with 17 stops, including 11 unassisted tackles.

After that junior season, he was named the "Man of the Year" by the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club and is one of only three college athletes to receive that honor.

The PSU defensive co-captain also led the Lions in tackles as a senior and earned second team All-America honors by The Associated Press and United Press International.

Mehl was drafted in the NFL's third round by the New York Jets and played nine years before his career was cut short with a recurring knee injury.

He was the Jets' leading defender from 1982-86 before a knee injury. The Jets' defensive signal-caller recorded 172 total tackles (105 solos and 67 assists) in 1984. In 1983, he intercepted seven passes and picked off 15 career interceptions.

Mehl was selected to the Pro Bowl after the 1985 season when he recorded 115 tackles, 43 assists and three pass interceptions.

After his NFL career ended, he returned to the Ohio Valley and resides in St. Clairsville.

Dee Davis (Athlete - 1980s)



Dee Davis (Wheeling Park High School, Class of 1981). The first OVAC girls' athlete to earn first team All-W. Va. honors three times set Ohio Valley and state scoring records which remain on the books after a quarter of a century. Overall, she set three OV and three W. Va. scoring standards.

A three-year Wheeling Park standout, she scored a school record 1,854 points including 716 for a 32.5 average as a senior. She was named state "Player of the Year" and captain of the Class AAA all-state team for the 1980 season. She scored a school-record 55 points vs. Weirton Madonna and set a state tournament Class AAA scoring record which remains on the books after 27 years. She tallied 43 points vs. Greenbrier East as a sophomore in 1978. In two state tournament games that year, she scored 76 points including 13 of 14 free throws.

Davis led Park to a state Class AAA runner-up spot as a senior when she also charted 104 steals, 71 assists and 87 rebounds. After the season, she was MVP in the state North-South game where she scored 30 points. She earned All-America mention in Street & Smith's and Converse magazines.

At Park, Davis also starred as a pitcher-shortstop on the first varsity softball teams and earned all-state recognition from the W. Va. Coaches Association.

She signed a basketball scholarship to Tennessee Tech where she played for two seasons before finishing her college career at West Virginia University. In her two seasons with the Mountaineers, she served as team co-captain in 1986 with Georgeann Wells, the first woman to dunk in a college basketball game. In Davis' junior season, WVU recorded its second-ever 20-win season with a 20-10 mark.

She also played basketball with a U.S. All-Star team in England and scored 150 points for a 21.4 average.

Davis has completed her 13th year as head girls' basketball coach at her alma mater Park. She has guided the Patriots into six state tournaments and won back-to-back Class AAA championships in 1998-99 and became the first female to win the all-sports "OVAC Coach of the Year" award. The Wheeling resident also coaches softball.

Brian Swisher (Athlete - 1980s)



Brian Swisher (Sistersville High School, Class of 1982). The 5-7, 145-pound dynamo became the first three-time first team All-W. Va. football honoree in Tyler County as he led Sistersville High to back-to-back state Class A championships in 1980 and '81.

Swisher led the Tigers to a 13-0 record in 1981 as he set an Ohio Valley and W. Va. record for scoring by a lineman with 26 touchdowns (receiving, rushing, returns) and 156 points. He was runner-up for the Kennedy Award as state player of the year and was accorded the Hunt Award as state Lineman of the Year.

He set season and career pass receiving marks in the Ohio Valley and averaged 39.2 yards on kickoff returns and 20.2 yards on punt returns. He also was productive on end-around rushing plays.

Swisher, who set an OV record by catching passes in 36 consecutive games — every game he started. His career regular season totals were 126 receptions for 2,174 yards and 23 TDs.

He led the OV in regular season pass receiving yards for 1980 (681 yards on 47 catches) and 1981 (906 yards and 14 TDs on 53 receptions). As a sophomore, he landed 26 passes for 582 yards.

Swisher was a three-time All-OVAC and All-Valley honoree as well as all-West Virginia three times.

In the spring, he competed in track as a 100 and 200-meter sprinter, long jumper and relay member. He won eight individual medals in three state Class AA meets — a first in the 100 as a sophomore, six seconds and a third, and was a member of a first place 4x100 relay team. He tied a state meet AA 100-meter record with a 10.9-second mark in the 1981 trials.

He signed a football scholarship with Marshall University and played four seasons, including three years as a starting wide receiver. He landed 106 passes from 1982-85 for 1,617 yards and 14 touchdowns. He was Marshall's leading receiver in 1983 with 32 catches for 560 yards and three scores. He also was a Herd track sprinter.

Swisher currently resides in Lewis Center, Ohio.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Joey Galloway (Athlete - 1990s)



Joey Galloway (Bellaire High School, Class of 1990). This Big Reds' four-sports performer has excelled on the prep, collegiate and professional levels.

The mercury-heeled wide receiver was an All-Ohio gridder for coach John Magistro before a sparkling career at Ohio State University. After his Scarlett & Gray days, Galloway was a first round draft pick by the Seattle Seahawks of the National Football League.

Galloway rewrote the Ohio Valley record books for pass receiving yards with 2,332 and touchdown receptions with 27. He ended with 108 career catches. The 5-9 explosive game-breaker helped lead the Big Reds to the OVAC 3-A football title his junior year, playing an integral role in the 9-1 campaign. He landed 43 passes for 973 yards and 13 TDs that fall. Galloway was a three-time All-OVAC and All-Valley honoree and was named All-Ohio second team in Division III as a senior.

In basketball, he was just as dominating as a point guard. Galloway was a starter for three straight OVAC championship teams for coach Gene Ammirante. He earned All-OVAC, All-Valley and All-Ohio honors.

The springtime saw Galloway serve the Big Reds as an infielder on the baseball diamond, but it was on the oval where he made an even bigger impact. Galloway claimed the state Division II 100-meter and 200 state sprint titles as a senior.

The Bellaire Bullet then took his amazing athletic skills to Columbus, starring for John Cooper on the gridiron. He was honored as an All-Big Ten wide receiver as a junior—a season in which he grabbed 47 passes for 946 yards. His career totals at Ohio State were 108 receptions for 1,894 yards and 19 TDs. Galloway finished with 2,754 all-purpose yards and was the team's co-captain in 1994. He was an All-Big Ten Academic honoree in 1991, 1993 and 1994 while earned the National Football Foundation Scholarship in 1994. He earned a degree in business/marketing.

Galloway was the eighth overall pick in the 1994 NFL Draft. He played five seasons with the Seahawks, catching 283 passes for 4,457 yards and 37 TDs. In his best season in Seattle, he collared 72 passes for 1,049 yards and 12 TDs. He left Seattle for the Dallas Cowboys and is now a member of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Matt Gaudio (Athlete - 1990s)



Matt Gaudio (Brooke High School, Class of 1991). This fluid athlete dominated the West Virginia prep hardwood as he was a four-year starter for the Bruins.

He concluded his sparkling Brooke career by being named the W. Va. "Player of the Year" as well as the Gatorade state "Player of the Year" in 1991. The 6-7 forward paced Brooke to records of 19-4, 22-4, 16-7 and 18-7 for a four-year career mark of 75-22.

Gaudio was a two-time all-state Class AAA honoree and twice named to the all-state tournament team. He averaged 17.9 points and 10.1 rebounds as a sophomore and followed that up with a state Class AAA-best 24.8 scoring norm as a junior while averaging 11 rebounds.

Gaudio capped his superb prep career with a brilliant senior campaign. He averaged 24.3 points and grabbed 13.4 rebounds to repeat as All-OVAC, All-Valley and All-W. Va. honors while being accorded honorable mention All-America. He was the first Bruin to earn first team all-state in boys' basketball. Gaudio surpassed the 1,000 mark in career points (1.874) and career rebounds (1,108), both Bruin records.

He opted to continue his academic and athletic career at Penn State University, where he was plagued by chronic back problems which required surgery. In spite of the medical woes. Gaudio endured to turn in a solid career. During his redshirt sophomore season, he averaged 9.4 points and 4.7 rebounds a game and was named recipient of the Lou Lamie Most Inspirational Player Award.

The following year, he served as student assistant coach while completing his liberal arts degree with an emphasis on architecture. He returned to play as a senior and was second on the team in scoring with a 13.1 averaged while collected 6.4 rebounds a game during a 21-7 record season.

Class of 2006

OVAC Hall of Fame

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Cal Giffin (OVAC 'Family')



Cal Giffin (Bellaire High School, Class of 1947). One of the legendary figures involved in the sport of high school track and cross country in the OVAC.

During his 17 years employed as a teacher and coach in the Bellaire City School District, Giffin was one of the founders and the director of the famed Bellaire Relays. During its 52-year history, the Bellaire Relays attracted many of Ohio's greatest athletes to the Nelson Field. At one time, the Bellaire Relays was recognized as the second-largest track event in the Buckeye State. His teams won five OVAC and district track championships. During his reign, the Big Reds won 58 dual/triangular track meets. Also while at Bellaire, he served as an assistant coach in football and basketball.

Giffin's time-consuming work and contributions to the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference included a term as president (1973-74) and commissioner of the football and basketball officials. He directed many major OVAC track meets and to honor his efforts, the league championships in track and field were renamed as the OVAC Cal Giffin Classic. He was a member of the Eastern District of the Ohio Athletic Board, the Ohio High School Coaches Association, the Ohio Football Coaches Association and the National Collegiate Track and Field Coaches Association. He was voted into the Ohio State Track Coaches Hall of Fame in 1972. Giffin was presented two awards of merit from the OHSAA and, following his death in 1975, he was selected for a posthumous Alumni Achievement Award by West Liberty State College. Giffin served the Eastern Ohio Coaches Association as president as well as being the state vice president for the Ohio Association of Track Coaches.

Athletically, Cal was a three-sport letterman (football, basketball and track) at Bellaire High. He played on the first Big Reds' football team to win an OVAC championship (1946). He also played in the Ohio-West Virginia All-Star Football Game in 1947. Giffin's career also led him to the Martins Ferry School District where he was the supervisor of elementary and secondary education. From there, he became the principal of St. Clairsville High School and later served as superintendent of the St. Clairsville-Richland School District. He received his B.A. in Education from West Liberty in 1951 and his Master of Arts Degree in school administration from WVU in 1967.

Ron Mauck (OVAC 'Family')



Ron Mauck (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1958). Educator, administrator, community leader. Mauck has been director of the OVAC Wrestling Tournament, one of the largest high school events of its kind in the entire country, since 1979. This highly-regarded championship was renamed as the Ron Mauck OVAC Wrestling Tournament in 2006.

A pupil of the late George Kovalick, an OVAC Hall of Famer and considered to be the patriarch of high school wrestler in the Ohio Valley, Mauck also established the conference's dual meet championship standings in 1971 and directed five W.Va. state tournaments at the Wheeling Civic Center (now WesBanco Arena). Three times, he served as a volunteer on the staff for NAIA and NCAA Division II championships (hosted by West Liberty State College) held in Wheeling. In addition to his duties with the conference mat tournament, Mauck was a long-time member of the Rudy Mumley OVAC Charity All-Star Football Classic. He was assistant game director and later served as game director from 1993 through 1998.

The Bridgeport High and West Liberty State College graduate, who earned his master's in safety education, began his teaching and coaching career in 1965 at Follansbee High School where he started the school's varsity wrestling program and coached the school's only individual state champion (Lou Daly). While at Follansbee, Mauck coached John Craig, a first-time wrestler as a senior in 1965 who went on to become an All-American at West Liberty and later was one of the area's outstanding coaches before becoming an administrator. When the consolidated Brooke High School opened in 1968, Ron was named to coach the wrestling team where he tutored the Bruins' first West Virginia mat champ in Jim Suddoth. Before retiring after a 34-year career in education, Mauck served Brooke as director of the school's Driver's Education Department, Physical Plant Director, Assistant Athletic Director and Athletic Director. In addition to having the OVAC Wrestling Tournament renamed in his honor, Mauck also was presented the "Mr. Mat" Award in 1985. He was named the W. Va. Wrestling Coaches Man of the Year (1987); and received recognition awards from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club (1985 and 1997); W. Va. Athletic Director of the Year (1995). Mauck twice was selected Warwood Lions Citizen of the Year, winner of the H.V. Corcoran, Sr. Award (2001) and a member of the Brooke County Wall of Fame (2006). He is past president of the W. Va. Safety Association, the Bridgeport Alumni and Warwood Junior High Athletic Association.

Boyd Nelson (Media)



Boyd Nelson (Bellaire High School, Class of 1945). Nelson spent 41 years as a photographer with *The Times Leader* in Martins Ferry. Fellow staffers and friends have called him a pioneer, a legend and, perhaps, the greatest goodwill ambassador in the newspaper's history. His work behind the camera, according to many area high school coaches, help bring the sports world alive to the readers of *The Times Leader*.

Nelson, a quiet, unassuming man, let his camera do his talking for him. No assignment was too big nor too menial for Nelson, who had the opportunity to take pictures of seven U.S. presidents from Harry Truman though Ronald Reagan. Nelson chronicled nearly every major happening throughout the Ohio Valley and was a familiar and much-welcome face at high school, college and professional games and matches from the start of his career in the late 1940s until his retirement in 1988. As was pointed out at the time of his death in 2003, there wasn't a gymnasium, football field or baseball diamond in *The Times Leader's* coverage area where Nelson didn't capture the exploits of athletes of all ages and abilities. Among the future professional greats he covered included baseball hall of famers Phil Niekro and Bill Mazeroski; basketball hall of famer John Havlicek, Joe Niekro, Tim Spencer, Olympic wrestler and coach Bobby Douglas and Allan Hornyak, just a to mention a few.

Boyd's devotion to his work also made him a role model and an inspiration to aspiring and seasoned photographers alike. Nelson shunned the limelight throughout his life despite the urgings of co-workers and admirers to enter his pictures in statewide competition. As a result, he was bypassed for many awards that easily would have come his way. However, United Press International began presenting awards to newspaper and magazine photographers in the early 1970s and the very first honoree was none other than Boyd Nelson. When *The Times Leader* published a pictorial history of Eastern Ohio in 1999, the book was dedicated to Nelson, a lifelong Belmont County resident. He began his career following a stint in the U.S. Navy. He served a stint in the Philippines during World War II. After returning home, Nelson attended Ohio University for a year. However, after being hired as a summer intern by *The Times Leader*, he never returned to college and made photography his lifetime profession.

Paul 'Bud' Billiard (Coaches)



Paul "Bud" Billiard (Wellsburg High School, Class of 1959). Head coach at Brooke High School for 23 seasons (1979-2001) where he compiled a record of 185 wins, 79 defeats and 1 tie. During this span, Billiard's Bruins won three West Virginia Class AAA state championships — 1985, 1987 and 1990. His 1987 and '90 powerhouses recorded perfect record seasons and both were nationally ranked. The 1987 team finished 25th in the country while the 1990 squad ended up in 23rd place. In 1994, Brooke also ended the campaign with a 10-0 record but lost in the state playoffs. Fifteen of his 23 Bruin teams participated in the post-season playoffs and seven made the state championship game. Also, Billiard coached the green and gold to seven OVAC Class AAAA Division championships. He coached in two Rudy Mumley OVAC Charity All-Star Football games and in three West Virginia North-South Games. He was among the founding members and past president of the Ohio Valley Football Coaches Association for whom he also was chairman of the group's annual awards dinner. He also assisted in organizing the OVFCA's Clinics and Prospect Nights. Billiard's Brooke coaching career also included eight years as an assistant in football, two years as a wrestling assistant, six years as head wrestling coach and three years as head track coach. Prior to Brooke, he spent four years as an assistant in football at Wheeling Central, two years as a volunteer assistant in wrestling and three years as head track coach.

While attending Wellsburg High School, he played four years of football and lettered three years, serving as team captain in 1958. He played baseball three years, earning two letters. At West Liberty State College, Billiard was a four-year varsity letterman in football playing on both the offensive and defensive lines. After his junior season, he earned first-team All-WVIAC laurels.

Among his awards are: Ohio Valley, OVAC and West Virginia Coach of the Year; Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Man of the Year; Carl Hamill Coaching Award; Steubenville Moose Lodge Coach of the Year; West Liberty State College Athletic Hall of Fame; 2005 Ohio Valley Football Coaches Hall of Fame inductee; H.V. Corcoran Sr. Award for the Brooke football program bringing national attention to the Ohio Valley; and a 2005 recipient of the West Virginia Athletic Coaches Association's Retired Coaching Award.

Richard 'Lefty' Hall (Coaches)



Richard "Lefty" Hall (Barnesville High School, Class of 1959). Hall was one of the most successful two-sport coaches (baseball/golf) in OVAC history, compiling a whopping 1,116 victories over a 34-year span.

He began his baseball coaching career at Powhatan High School for a year before taking the same post at St. Clairsville High School. In his 33 years with the Red Devils (1969-2001), his teams amassed an outstanding 515-320 record.

With "Lefty" calling the shots from the dugout, St. Clairsville won seven OVAC championships and made five Ohio High School Athletic Association regional tournament appearances (1978, 1982, 1986, 1990 and 1997). The Red Devils advanced to the state tournament "Final Four" in 1997. St. Clairsville also won five Eastern Ohio Baseball League titles under Hall's guidance.

Hall as named OVAC Coach of the year in 1991 and received the same accolade from the Eastern District three times, 1990, 1995 and 1997. He also served as one of the coaches in the Mizuno All-Star Series in 1997. A true baseball "junkie," Hall was inducted into the Ohio High School Baseball Coaches Hall of Fame in 1996 and was named the Ohio Baseball Hall of Fame "Man of the Year" in 1999.

Hall coached six players who signed professional baseball contracts, the list including Gerry Craft, Gene Cattane, Ted Rose, Scott Barnhouse, Joe Slavik and Joe Dudek.

In golf, "Lefty" coached St. Clairsville for 27 years (1974-2000) , finishing with a 601-123 record. He had three unbeaten teams and also tutored three squads that advanced to the Ohio state tournament. The Red Devils also collected 14 OVAC golf championships.

Hall, a life-long resident of Barnesville, lettered in baseball and track while performing for the Shamrocks. He graduated from Ohio University.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Warren Pugh (Officials)



Warren "Nookie" Pugh (The Linsly School, Class of 1920). The Wheeling Island resident who died in 1983 at the age of 81 served the coaching and officiating profession very well and also was an outstanding contributor to his committee.

As an official, Pugh served as a football and basketball referee for over 40 years. In football, he worked in both high school and college, including the West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference and West Virginia University, Pitt and Penn State. A basketball official for more than 40 years, Pugh officiated high school and college contests. In 1933 and 1934, he worked the entire West Virginia state high school basketball tournament, his partners being Judge Paul Camilletti the first year and Dink Westfall the second year. Pugh and John Gott of Bluefield blew the whistle for all 11 games of the first WVIAC tournament held in 1935 at Fairmont. Pugh served as president of both the Ohio Valley Board of Football and Basketball Officials. He also was the referee of the famed Bellaire Relays for many years and was later named as the meet's honorary referee. He was also honored for his service by the Shadyside Relays and the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission. Pugh conducted officials' clinics in several sports and wrote a newspaper series on officiating. Pugh also was a Red Cross instructor in water safety and life-saving for over 50 years. In his youth, he was recognized as a tri-state diving champion and was known to many people in Wheeling for diving off the Suspension Bridge into the Ohio River. He performed that feat for the first time on Labor Day during the state fair held when he was a teenager. He repeated that dive on several other occasions during his youth. He coached swimming at his alma mater The Linsly School for nearly three decades, guiding the Cadets to 26 OVAC championships, including 25 in a row.

Pugh was also a tremendous athlete, especially as a football player. He attended Alderson-Broaddus College in Philippi for two years and played football before transferring to Davis & Elkins College where was a stellar fullback and center for Hall of Fame Coach Cam Henderson. Since eligibility rules never really existed in those days, Pugh played four years at D&E..His community service included 15 years as Wheeling's Recreation Director, two terms as Ohio County Sheriff and six years as an Ohio County Commissioner. Pugh was inducted into the West Virginia Sports Hall of Fame (1980), the Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame (1984) and now the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Hall of Fame.

Bob Gain (Athlete - 1940s)



Bob Gain (Weir High School, Class of 1947). An all-time great on the high school, college and professional levels, he started his football career for the Red Riders and twice earned first team All-OVAC honors as a lineman and was honored on the 1946 All-W.Va. selections.

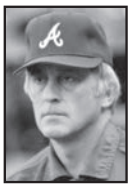
In 1969, he was selected as a 'Modern Era' defensive tackle on an All-Time Ohio Valley football team selected by The Intelligencer newspaper. In 2005, he was honored on an All-Time W.Va. high school team selected by The Fairmont Times newspaper.

At Weir High, he was the largest all-state honoree at 6-2, 210-pounds and was a two-way tackle as well as handling punting and kickoff duties. His late coach Carl Hamill never singled out his best Red Rider football product but always started his list with Gain, a four-year starter and his most honored protégé.

Gain is regarded as the greatest lineman in University of Kentucky, where he was a three-time All-Southeastern Conference honoree and a two-time first team All-America choice in 1949 and 1950. As a senior, he won the Outland Trophy as the nation's outstanding lineman, the first from the SEC so honored, and one of only two from the Ohio Valley. The other Outland Trophy honoree was the University of Iowa's Calvin Jones from Steubenville High. Playing for the legendary Paul "Bear" Bryant at Kentucky, the Wildcats were 33-10-2 in Gain's four seasons and he was co-captain of the 10-1 record team that upset national champion Oklahoma in the 1951 Sugar Bowl. Gain was the No. 5 choice — the highest ever for an OVAC athlete — in the first round of the 1951 NFL Draft by the Green Bay Packers. However, he opted for Ottawa in the CFL before starting a 12-year NFL career with the Cleveland Browns. The five-time Pro Bowler was a starter on three NFL championship teams under legendary coach Paul Brown in 1954, 1955 and 1964.

The Cleveland area resident has been inducted into seven Halls of Fame — College Football, West Virginia Sports, Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan, University of Kentucky, Cleveland and Akron Halls and Cleveland Browns' Legends Hall.

Phil Niekro (Athlete - 1950s)



Phil Niekro (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1957). The Baseball Hall of Famer got his athletic start with the Bulldogs where he was a three-sport performer. Besides baseball, he was a football end and basketball forward and a teammate of fellow OVAC Hall of Famer John Havlicek.

Nicknamed "Knucksie" because of his staple pitch, the knuckleball, which he learned from his father, Niekro was a four-year Bulldog pitcher with a 17-1 career record. His only loss was 1-0 to Tiltonsville in 1954, his freshman year, when fellow Baseball and OVAC Hall of Famer Bill Mazeroski hit the game-winning home run. The 1955 Bulldog team shared the East Ohio League title with Martins Ferry. In a 9-4 Ohio sectional tournament win over St. John's, Niekro won the game in relief and belted a two-run single. Bridgeport, however, was halted in the finals by Shadyside, a team twice defeated by the Bulldogs. In 1956, Niekro and the Bulldogs defeated Steubenville Central, 7-1, in the Class A district tournament after sectional wins over Barnesville and St. Clairsville. Bridgeport bowed to East Liverpool in the district finals. As a senior, Niekro tossed a four-hitter and struck out 10 in a 4-2 win over Steubenville Central for the OVAC Ohio-side title. He earlier hurled an 8-2 win over East Liverpool in the Class AA district semifinals. Unbeaten Steubenville Central halted Bridgeport, 6-1 in the finals.

Niekro, who also played for the Bridgeport Legion team and Blaine in the summer Twilight League, was signed by the Milwaukee Braves for a $500 bonus at a 1958 tryout camp in Bellaire.

In 1964, he started a 24-year major league career with the Braves, New York Yankees, Cleveland Indians and Toronto Blue Jays. He had a 318-274 career record while appearing in 864 games and striking out 3,342 batters, eighth on the all-time charts. He hurled a no-hitter and won five Gold Gloves and was named to five All-Star teams. The Braves honored him by erecting a bronze statue in front of their home stadium and, in 1997, he was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. He resides in the Atlanta area.

Lee Patrone (Athlete - 1950s)



Lee Patrone (Bellaire High School, Class of 1956). For 50 years, Patrone was the all-time leading career scorer in Big Reds' history with 1,842 points in three seasons. He led Bellaire High to three straight sectional titles with won-lost marks of 18-4, 20-3 and 19-4 while averaging 23.5, 26.7 and 32.9 points per game each season. His 27.1 point career average remains a school record.

The two-time first team All-OVAC honoree, and an All-Ohio first team honoree by The Associated Press as a senior, he was a scoring machine with 57 career games over 20 points, including all 23 as a senior, and he had 28 straight games in which he scored at least 20 points.

He tallied 54 points twice in a game in 1956, including his final game while playing with an injured led against Martins Ferry in the district toumament title game. Ferry prevailed, 91-87, while surviving a limping Patrone's heroics. Earlier, against a Bridgeport team featuring Basketball and OVAC Hall of Famer John Havlicek, he converted 25 goals. His 299 goals in a season remains a school standard.

After a brief stay at Ohio State, the stocky 6-0 guard enrolled at West Virginia University in 1957 and led the 1958 freshman team in scoring with a 20-point norm. A member of the 1959 NCAA runner-up team led by All-American Jerry West, he was second to West in 1960 team scoring with a 14.2 per game norm and was named to three all-tournament reams: NCAA regional, Southern Conference and University of Kentucky. A Virginia sportswriter described him as "good enough to be cocky and cocky enough to be good."

As a senior, he was a third team All-America honoree by Helms Foundation. He ended his career with 1,028 points — then seventh best in WVU history.

After graduation, he taught and coached five seasons at Wintersville High School where his first 1969 team went 14-4 and 1972 team was 16-4. After retiring, he relocated to his current home in Florida.

Bob Hummel (Athlete - 1960s)



Bob Hummell (Moundsville High School, Class of 1966). This 6 ft. 3 guard was a scoring machine for Moundsville High School before taking his vast hoop talents to West Virginia University.

Hummell finished his stellar four-year prep career with 1,941 points, good for a 22.6 per game average. That average still ranks sixth among Class AAA players in the state.

His senior year was one for the record books at the Marshall County school. He poured in 897 points in 25 games for a 35.9 average, which is tied for the highest average in Class AAA archives.

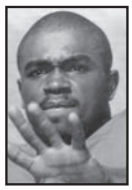
Moreover, his scoring antics translated into team success as Moundsville finished as state runnerup in Class AAA, the school's first state final since 1920. Hummell torched Richwood for 45 markers in the state semifinal game. He established the Moundsville single-game scoring mark with 53 points in a win against Follansbee. Hummell was chosen as the West Virginia "Player of the Year" by the Morgantown Touchdown Club while also being named captain of the Class AAA all-state team, all-OVAC and Scholastic Coach All-America. He also was a top-notch baseball player for Moundsville, earning second-team all-state honors as a pitcher.

Following his glorious stay at Moundsville, Hummell joined the WVU hoop squad and he wasted no time in making his presence felt. Hummell led the WVU frosh team in scoring with a 24.2 average, including a 45 - point outburst against Maryland and 41 against Duquesnse. In those days, freshman were ineligible by NCAA rules from playing on the varsity level.

He went on to average 12.9, 15.5 and 14.0 points a game the following three seasons, all of which he served the Mountaineers as a starter. Hummell was the team's captain hi senior season.

Hummell totaled 1,137 points in his WVU career, placing him seventh in school annals at the time his career ended in 1970. he was an adept free throw shooter, hitting at an 80.7 clip for his career. Hummell — who had 14 games of 20 or more points — was selected to the 1966-75 all-time WVU hoop team.

Harry Wilson (Athlete - 1960s)



Harry Wilson (Steubenville High School, Class of 1963). This former Big Red star ranks with the elite running backs in OVAC history.

His gridiron career at Steubenville was nothing short of spectacular. His ability to carry the football took him to a starring role at the University of Nebraska and a short stint with the NFL's Philadelphia Eagles.

The 5 ft. 11, 190-pounder was also a safety and kick returner for Big Red, but rushing the football is what Wilson did best.

He carried the Big Red to a 9-1 mark his senior season, a campaign in which the Jefferson County charges pocketed a prized 14-8 win over heralded Massillon. Wilson paced the Ohio Valley in both rushing yards and scoring with 1,756 infantry stripes and 23 touchdowns. The former standard is a modern day school record for a 10-game campaign.

His achievements garnered him Ohio "Back of the Year" designation by both the AP and UPI in Class AA, which was the largest class back then. He was named first team all-Ohio and a Scholastic Coach All-American. Wilson was almost as dominating his junior year. The "Steubenville Stomper" rushed for 1,586 yards and scored 28 touchdowns and 168 points in 10 games. He was selected first team all-Ohio by AP as a safety while also earning all-OVAC and all-Valley laurels.

Wilson — who was also nicknamed "Lighthorse"— enjoyed a sparkling career at Nebraska. He led the Cornhuskers in rushing his junior and senior seasons, finishing his career with 1,702 yards and a stellar 5.0 per carry average.

He was named unanimous all-Big Eight as a senior and honorable mention All-America by UPI. He has the distinction of playing in three major bowl games —Cotton, Orange and Sugar.

After his playing days in Lincoln, Wilson was selected in the third round of the 1967 NFL draft by the Eagles. He spent three years with the team as a backup running back and kick returner.

Ed Burgy (Athlete - 1970s)



Ed Burgy (Bellaire High School, Class of 1971). This former Big Reds' star remains the measuring for prep baseball greatness in the Ohio Valley.

While also starring in football and basketball at the Guernsey Street school, Burgy distinguished himself as arguably the premier prep baseball player in OVAC annals. While his baseball statistics are staggering, he accomplished them in just three seasons as Bellaire High did not start a baseball program until Burgy's sophomore season. Known for his overpowering pitching prowess, Burgy was also a tremendous shortstop and powerful hitter. Burgy etched his named in Bellaire High, Ohio Valley and OHSAA record books. The three-year All-Valley first-team honoree completed his prep career with a 20-5 record, still the most wins ever by a Big Reds' pitcher. He owns the career strikeout mark with 326 (in just 175 innings) and the single-season strikeout standard of 128. While possessing nearly-unhittable heat, he also owned great control. The talented right-hander walked just 31 batters in his career and went eight straight games without issuing a base on balls. He carved out state records with a minuscule 0.13 ERA for a season and an 0.63 ERA for a career. His third OHSAA record was for hurling 16 shutouts. Burgy also set an Ohio Valley mark with 23 strikeouts in a 10-inning no-hitter versus River. He was also a deadly hitter. Burgy owns Bellaire High records for hits in a game (6), triples in a season (8) and career triples (12).

Burgy also was a stellar, four-year football performer for coaches Rudy Sharkey and Jake Olsavsky. He was a slashing running back until his senior season. Olsavsky opted to switch Burgy to quarterback, a move that paid big dividends. Burgy helped guide the Reds to an 8-1-1 season, losing only to Marietta (12-0) while tying Wintersville (0-0). He was joined in the backfield by Ron Lee, who went on to fame with WVU and the Baltimore Colts. Burgy was a multi-talented hoopster. Starting for three seasons, he poured in 1,197 points, a total that still ranks seventh on the all-time school scoring card. It was second only to legendary Lee Patrone when Burgy hung up the Big Red sneakers. He was a first-team All-Valley Big School honoree his sophomore and junior seasons. He exploded in his senior campaign for a 21.2 per game average.

Burgy was a sixth-round draft choice of the New York Mets and spent three years in the Mets' farm system, first in Virginia followed by a stop in Pompano (Fla.) and Memphis. He had 13 wins in one season and fanned 20 in one game.

Bruce Smith (Athlete - 1970s)



Bruce Smith (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1976). He is at the top of the list when it comes to distance running as a four-time Ohio state champion who set countless meet, valley and school records along the way.

In cross country, Smith was a three-time All-Ohioan (1973, '74 and '75), capturing first place at the state meet in both his junior (9:43.0) and senior (9:33.4) seasons after placing seventh (10:05.0) as a sophomore. His time in 1975 was the state record at the time.

As both a junior and senior, he also finished first in the sectional, district, OVAC and Belmont County meets and finished undefeated both years. As a sophomore, he was second in the sectional, district and county meet and third in the OVAC.

He was a three-time All-Eastern District and All-Valley honoree in cross country as well.

In track, Smith earned All-Ohio status two times (1975, '76), winning the state championship in the two-mile run both years. He posted a time of 9:11.1 as a senior after winning in 9:31.1 as a junior. He also placed seventh at the state event as a sophomore (9:39.9).

He finished first in the sectional and district meets all three years, winning the county event twice and finishing as runner-up once. In OVAC meets, he won the OVAC one-mile run and finished third in the 880-yard run as a senior; and captured the two-mile run as both a sophomore and junior.

Smith garnered All-Eastern District and All-Valley laurels three times in track.

In the two sports at Martins Ferry, Smith was part of four undefeated teams, three sectional and district championship teams, one OVAC championship team and three OVAC runner-up teams.

Smith was also a long-time competitor in most area road races, including several years as the top local runner in the Elby's Distance Race (now the Ogden 20K Classic).

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Wendy Baker (Athlete - 1980s)



Wendy Baker (East Liverpool High School, Class of 1989). A two-sport standout for the Lady Potters, excelling in both basketball and softball.

On the court, she was a four-year varsity performer, becoming the first player in school history to exceed 1,000 career points, finishing with 1,127 tallies. As a senior, she averaged 21.5 points per game. Baker also excelled defensively, posting 291 career steals including 135 as a senior.

As a senior, she was a second team all-Ohio Division I selection who was selected to play in the McDonald's All-Star Classic in Columbus. She was also OVAC Class 4-A, District 5, Division I and All-Columbiana County "Player of the Year". She was also an All-OVAC and All-Eastern District first team choice as a junior and an all-District honorable mention pick as a sophomore.

On the diamond, Baker's career pitching numbers included 49 victories and 226 strikeouts and .400-plus batting average. Her senior season numbers included a lofty .477 average along with some impressive pitching numbers — 19 victories, 117 strikeouts and a 0.54 E.R.A. She batted .483 as a junior with 32 RBI and had 109 pitching wins, registering 109 strikeouts and a 1.77 ERA. As a sophomore, she hit .422.

Baker's softball all-star honors included two-time All-Ohio (first team as a senior, second team as a junior); and two-time All-OVAC Class 4-A.

She attended Wheeling College and played basketball for two seasons, scoring 882 points and posting 182 steals during that time. She gained first team All-West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference honors as a sophomore after gaining honorable mention as a freshman.

Dennis Swearingen (Athlete - 1980s)



Dennis Swearingen (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1982). He earned 10 varsity letters in four sports, making his biggest marks in football and basketball.

In football, he was a three-year letterman as starting quarterback/defensive back, amassing 1,616 yards passing and 890 yards rushing while leading the Purple Riders to a combined 21-9 record, including a spotless 10-0 mark in his sophomore season, Ferry's first perfect record in 20 years. On defense, he was credited with 125 tackles and had 11 pass interceptions. He was a two-time first team AP All-Ohio Class AA defensive back, earning second team all-star honors from UPI both years as well. He also garnered first team All-OVAC Class AAA, All-Eastern District Class AA and All-Valley honors twice. Following his senior season, Swearingen was named a Centennary Prep All-American, an Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club special honoree and participated in the OVAC Charity All-Star Football Game.

In basketball, Swearingen was a three-year starter and 1,000-point career scorer and he was a key member of Ferry's squad which posted a 20-5 record and advanced to the Ohio Class AA regional finals in Athens in 1982. Scoring 14.7 points per game as a senior, he was named first team All-OVAC Class AAA (captain), All-District 12 and All-Valley as well as second team All-Eastern District Class AA. He played in both the OVAC and District 12 All-Star Games. As a junior, Swearingen averaged 18.9 points per game and was named first team All-OVAC Class AAA and All-District 12, second team All-Eastern District Class AA and third team All-Valley.

Swearingen also was a three-year letterman in baseball, earning All-OVAC Class AAA honors twice. He also lettered in track as a senior.

Swearingen went on to a stellar four-year football career at Ohio University, graduating in 1986 and positioning himself in the top five on the Bobcats' all-time passing list in 10 categories (through 2005). He is second in pass attempts in a game (57) and season (383); third in pass completions for a game (31) and season (195) as well as TD passes for a season (13); fourth in yards passing for a game (355), season (2,056) and career (3,267) as well as pass attempts (569) and completions (312) for a career; and fifth in career passing yards (3,267).

Jeff Snedegar (Athlete - 1990s)



Jeff Snedegar (Buckeye Trail High School, Class of 1995). He put up lofty numbers during his four-year gridiron career, culminating in his selection as the AP All-Ohio Division V Offensive Player of the Year and finishing as runner-up in the voting for Ohio's "Mr. Football" award following his senior season.

A 6 ft. 3, 210-pound four-year letterman at quarterback and linebacker for the Warriors, he racked up 7,000 yards offensively and registered 673 tackles on defense. He also earned second team All-Ohio following his sophomore and junior years and was a three-time All-Eastern District and All-OVAC selection.

As a senior, he led Trail to its first and only OHSAA playoff appearance (the Warriors finished with an 11-2 overall record, winning two games before losing in the Division V state semifinals to Wellsville). That year, he passed for what was then a school record 1,769 yards while rushing for 1,621 yards for a combined total of 3,390 yards. He participated in 212 defensive stops as a senior.

Snedegar was also a three-year letterman in basketball (he didn't play as a junior), finishing fourth on Trail's all-time scoring list with 834 points and third in career rebounding with 561. He averaged 16.1 points per game as a senior, earning special mention AP All-Ohio as well as first team All-Eastern District and All-OVAC.

The 2000 Buckeye Trail Hall of Fame inductee went on to a stellar career at the University of Kentucky (1996-99), earning four letters as an outside linebacker. As a freshman, he had 42 tackles, started three games and was named the outstanding special teams' player and he followed that up with 97 tackles as a sophomore. Snedegar had 63 tackles and four sacks as a junior, helping Kentucky to an Outback Bowl berth where he recorded 11 tackles in a loss to Penn State University. In his final year at UK, he had 84 tackles, four sacks and two interceptions, earning him defensive MVP honors. He was selected to the All-Southeast Conference squad and was named to the All-American Farm Football Team by Successful Farming Magazine.

Snedegar was signed by the Miami Dolphins of the NFL in 2000 as an undrafted free agent.

Bill West (Athlete - 1990s)



Billy West (Buckeye Local High School. Class of 1993). He made his biggest impact on the football field, earning All-Ohio honors three times, including twice as a first team selection.

West also was a three-time All-OVAC selection (1990, '91 and '92) and a three-time All-Eastern District pick (first team in '91 and '92, second team in '90). He also participated in the Rudy Mumley/OVAC Charity All-Star Football Classic following his senior season.

After starting as a freshman at Buckeye North, where he rushed for 900 yards despite missing two-plus games due to injury, he put up some ultra-impressive numbers at the newly-consolidated Buckeye Local High School.

He finished with what still stands as a school-record 4,658 yards, including a single-season effort of1,846 yards as a senior. He also had 1,719 yards as a junior and 1,093 as a sophomore. He also owns six of the top seven individual game rushing records at Buckeye Local, headed by a whopping 335-yard game against Martins Ferry in 1991 (second all-time).

West scored 352 points on the gridiron, including 152 in his final season.

During his three years with the Panthers, the team compiled a 28-4 combined record (9-2 in 1990,10-1 in 1991 and 9-1 in 1992), making the playoffs twice and narrowly missing on a third.

West also lettered three years in track and two in basketball for the Panthers.

He was a four-year letterman at the University of Pittsburgh, starting for three years and earning All-Big East "Offensive Player of the Year" honors as a sophomore (1994) after replacing All-American tailback Curtis Martin in game two and rushing for 1,358 yards, fifth on the all-time single-season rushing list. A Panther tri-captain as a senior, West finished as the school's fourth all-time leading rusher with 2,803 yards.

Class of 2007

OVAC Hall of Fame

Sponsored by Robinson Auto Group

Donna Joseph (OVAC 'Family')



Donna Joseph (Shadyside High School, Class of 1964). A leader in the OVAC track and cross country community for three decades, she also coached girls track and boys and girls cross country at alma mater Shadyside High School from 1983-98.

A registered track and cross country official for 30 years, she started working Cal Giffin OVAC Track Meets in the early 1970s and continues to serve as director of the Class A-AA meet, a position she started in the mid-1980s.

She currently is chairperson of the OVAC Track Committee with over 15 years on the board and is co-chairperson of the OVAC Cross Country Committee with over 20 years of service with the group.

A recipient, along with husband Butch Joseph, of the Cal Giffin OVAC Track Service Award, she also has been active with the Ohio Association of Track and Cross Country Coaches.

She is presently the secretary and membership chairperson of the OAT&CCC and serves on the Executive Board of the statewide organization. Donna and Butch handle the registration for the annual track clinic attended by an estimated 1,700 coaches.

She served as Meet Manager for the Midwest Meet of Champions when Ohio hosted the event at Ohio Wesleyan College and also served as Ohio coach when the meet was contested in Indianapolis, Ind. The Josephs were awarded the Ed Barker Award this year from the OAT&CCC.

Besides track and cross country, Donna also has served on the committees and worked the annual Sam Mumley OVAC Basketball All-Star games and the Rudy Mumley OVAC Football All-Star games. She also assisted with the OVAC Volleyball Tournaments and team standings. The 1964 Shadyside High graduate earned her degree from Ohio State University in 1968 and her master's degree in 1983 from Ohio University. She was a mathematics instructor at Shadyside from 1968-98.

Nick Bedway (Media)



Nick Bedway (Wheeling Central High School, Class of 1958). One of the area's most versatile and prolific newspaper sports journalists for five decades, he has been on the scene for numerous OVAC events since 1960.

After attending West Liberty State College for one year, he joined the Wheeling News-Register as a copy boy in 1960. Later that year, he joined The Intelligencer staff as a sportswriter. In 1967, Bedway joined the News-Register staff headed by Bill Van Horne and was promoted to Associate Sports Editor in 1971. Bedway became N-R Sports Editor in 1995 and was named Executive Sports Editor of The Intelligencer/News-Register in 2000, a position he held until he retired in 2005. He authored daily and Sunday newspaper columns entitled "Nick's Notebook" and also wrote columns on area golf, bowling, college sports, outdoors and the Wheeling Nailers' hockey team. The OVAC media guide was dedicated to Bedway in 1999. He served as co-publicity director of the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Game from its inception in 1972 until 1990. Bedway also served as the OVAC standings' statistician in football, boys and girls basketball and baseball for more than 25 years.

Bedway served one term in 1977 as president of the W. Va. Sports Writers Association and received the Gene Morehouse Award in 1990 from the organization. He was inducted into the Ogden Newspapers 20K Classic Hall of Fame in 2006 and the Media Wing of the Ohio Baseball Hall of Fame in 1996. He twice was selected to serve as the Honorary Referee for the W. Va. Super Six Class AA state championship football games held at Wheeling Island Stadium.

Bedway was the inaugural recipient of the Father John Lester Award for a lifetime of support to local sports and youth of the Ohio Valley and received the Spirit and Leadership Award from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club. He also has received awards from the Wheeling Soccer Association, Allegheny Mountain District U. S. Tennis Association, Wheeling Post 1 American Legion Baseball Team, Oglebay Park Men's Golf Club, and the Ohio Valley Golf Association. A past member of the Wheeling Hall of Fame Committee and current member of the OVAC Hall of Fame Committee, Bedway also is active with the Wheeling Lions Club and received, in 2005, the Leonard Jarrett Award, the highest Lion honor bestowed in West Virginia. Currently the chapter secretary and Board of Directors' member, he has served as media relations director, chapter president, first vice-president and Tail Twister. Married 45 years to the former Judy Katona, the Bedways had four children and have five grandchildren.

Earl Klevins (Officials)



Earl Klevins (Warwood High School, Class of 1934). One of the Ohio Valley's most prominent football and basketball officials during a 35-year career from 1938 to 1973.

Klevins attended Wheeling High School for one and a half years before transferring to Warwood High, from which he graduated in 1934. He played high school basketball at both schools.

Earl attended Bethany College where he played football and basketball along with competing in track under legendary coach John Knight.

Klevins officiated in his first basketball game in 1938 at the Madison gymnasium. The opponents on that occasion were Wheeling High and Bridgeport and his officiating partner was another OVAC Hall of Fame member, the late Walter Heil. Thirty-five years later when he hung up his whistle, Klevins had officiated in more than 1,300 basketball games and 570 football games on the high school and collegiate level.

Along with serving as an OVAC official, Klevins officiated games in the Southern Conference, the West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference and at many other colleges in the tri-state area.

He also played professionally with the Wheeling Blues basketball team and was a long-time participant in local independent leagues and tournaments.

Klevins was a long-time standout on the area tennis courts, winning many local, regional and national tournaments. In 1975, Earl and his partner won the United States national doubles title in the 75-and up age bracket. The tournament was held in Myrtle Beach, SC. At age 45, he won the West Virginia state singles title and teamed with the late Loran Mercer for doubles honors in their age group. Earl also won numerous Oglebay Park Tennis Club championships through his mid-80s at which time he retired from competitive tennis.

The committee for the Samuel A. Mumley OVAC Basketball Classic presented Klevins with the Robert "Bobby" Dawson Officials Award. Earl and his wife Lucy have been married for more than 70 years. They raised three children: Earl Jr., Judy and Robert. They have been blessed with four grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Sam Andy (Coaches)



Sam Andy (Wheeling High School, Class of 1958). The winningest coach in Ohio Valley high school boys' basketball history with 611 wins over a 39-year career, Andy surpassed a record set by charter OVAC Hall of Fame inductee Richard L. "Dick" Potts.

Andy's head coaching career included two seasons at Frazeysburg (O.) High School (1964-1966), seven years at Wheeling High School (1969-1976) and the last 30 years at Wheeling Park High School (1976-2006).

Second all-time for victories in West Virginia's big school class, Andy's teams won three Class AAA state championships (1976 at Wheeling High, 1980 and 1995 at Wheeling Park). The 1995 state final was one of the memorable championship games in W.Va. boys' basketball history as Andy's Patriots defeated Beckley Woodrow Wilson 99-96 in a triple-overtime masterpiece.

He also had one other Patriot squad finish as the state runner-up (1997) and four semifinalist teams (1988, 1990, 1998 and 2000). Andy coached in 922 games and his clubs experienced only three losing seasons. Under his direction, Wheeling High and Wheeling Park qualified for an OVAC record 20 state tournaments. In 37 years at the two Ohio County schools, Andy produced 31 sectional championship teams, 28 Region One titlists and six Ohio Valley Athletic Conference division pennant winners.

Through most of his career, the Wheeling Wildcats and Park Patriots dominated their rivals in the conference, winning 78 percent of their games against OVAC opponents. They also annually played a schedule that included many of the top basketball powers in the state. Andy coached four West Virginia Player of the Year standouts and had 31 players earn college scholarships, including several Division I stalwarts.

He twice was honored as the OVAC Coach of the Year (1976 and 1995). In 2004, he was selected as the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club's Co-Man of the Year along with Monroe Central Coach Jay Circosta. In 2007 he was the recipient of the Earl Haberfield Coaches' Award presented by the committee directing the annual Samuel A. Mumley OVAC Basketball Classic. A 1958 graduate of Wheeling High School, Andy graduated from West Liberty State College in 1963. He was a basketball starter and letterman at both schools.

Bill Hinegardner (Coaches)



Bill Hinegardner (Meadow Bridge High School, Class of 1960). Referred to by the late Bill Van Horne as W.Va. Wrestling's "Man of Character," Hinegardner received his bachelor's degree from Concord College in 1965 and master's degree from West Virginia University in 1968. The former Concord basketball and baseball player entered the Marshall County School System as a mathematics teacher in the 1964-65 school year. He served as an assistant coach in wrestling and football at Moundsville High for three years before taking over the head wrestling position when the consolidated John Marshall High School opened its doors at the outset of the 1968-69 school year. During his 14 years as head coach, the Monarch program became one of the most successful in the OVAC and also in the state of West Virginia. Hinegardner's teams won four W. Va. Class AAA championships (1972, 1973, 1974 and 1979). The Monarchs were also runners-up four times and finished lower than sixth place only once in the W. Va. State Tournament. The Ron Mauck OVAC Wrestling Tournament saw Hinegardner's John Marshall powerhouses take the overall team title four times (1972, '73, '74, '77) and finish second five times. The Monarchs also earned five OVAC Class 4-A titles and emerged as Class 4-A Dual Meet winners five times. From December of 1971 through December of 1976, Hinegardner's wrestlers went through 41 straight dual matches without a defeat. His overall dual meet record was 133-29-1. Hinegardner's program produced 20 individual state champions. In 1996, he was a member of the late Mike Linsky's staff that led John Marshall to the W. Va. Class AAA football title. He served as President or Director of the W. Va. Wrestling Coaches Assoc.; the Region One Coaches Association; Marshall County Coaches Association; Co-Director of the OVAC and W. Va. State Tournaments; Executive Board Member of the OVAC and the WVSSAC for Wrestling. His awards include National Wrestling Hall of Fame Lifetime Service in Wrestling Award (2004); National High School Coaches Association District 3 Coach of the Year (1976); OVAC Coach of the Year (1974); W. Va. Wrestling Coach of the Year (three times); Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Achievement Awards (two times); Mr. Mat Award for contributions to the sport of wrestling in the OVAC (1984); Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Carl R. Hamill Award (2000); Moundsville Area Junior Chamber of Commerce Jim Edge Award (1977) given for outstanding work in religious and youth activities; and the John Marshall High School Wall of Fame (First Class, 2005). After retiring from Marshall County in 1999, Bill went to work for the Switzerland of Ohio School District at River High as a Guidance Counselor until he retired in 2004.

Joe Fortunato (Athlete - 1940s)



Joe Fortunato (Mingo High School, Class of 1948). A nine-time letterwinner in three sports at Mingo (football, basketball and baseball), he was an All-Ohio Valley Athletic Conference performer as a football and basketball player.

Fortunato enrolled at Virginia Military Institute, but transferred to Mississippi State when the Keydets' head coach Slick Morton accepted the job with the Bulldogs. At Mississippi State, Fortunato became an All-Southeastern Conference fullback-linebacker.

The honorable mention All-America performer led Mississippi State in rushing and had a game high of 169 yards against North Texas State.

Highlight of his collegiate career occurred when the Bulldogs defeated national champion Tennessee 7-0. Volunteers' Coach General Tom Neyland praised Fortunato after the game by calling him one of the greatest players his teams at Tennessee had ever faced.

Fortunato was drafted in the seventh round by the Chicago Bears, but played one season in the Canadian League before signing with the National Football League team.

He started at linebacker for 12 seasons (1955-1966) with the "Monsters of the Midway" and was named first team All-Pro three times along with being selected for the Pro Bowl on five occasions. The defensive captain of the Bears was also captain of the last Pro Bowl team coached by the legendary Vince Lombardi.

After his playing career, Fortunato spent two seasons on the Bears' staff, coaching the linebackers one year and then serving as defensive coordinator the next year.

Fortunato also is the only Ohio Valley athlete to be selected to the National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame. He was the leading vote-getter in The Intelligencer's 1970 All-Time Ohio Valley Team, which was selected by a vote of the area sports fans.

Fortunato also is a member of the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame.

Don Fleming (Athlete - 1950s)



Don Fleming (Shadyside High School, Class of 1955). The two-time All-Ohio Valley Athletic Conference first team honoree in football, Fleming was captain of the Tigers' undefeated conference champions in 1954. He also played center for the Shadyside squad that won an OVAC division title in basketball. This versatile athlete played in the Ohio East-West All-Star baseball game held in Columbus and performed in the Ohio-West Virginia All-Star Football Game held during the summer of 1955 at Wheeling Island Stadium. Fleming went on to the University of Florida on a football scholarship. He was a three-year starter and a two-way end performer for the Gators. He was elected captain of the 1958 team that played in the Gator Bowl and was a member of the All-Southeastern Conference team that same year. He was drafted by the Chicago Cardinals of the National Football League and the Boston Patriots of the American Football League. However, Fleming elected to remain in college to complete work on his degree and play baseball. As a senior, Fleming also was chosen captain of the Florida baseball team that won the SEC championship and earned a berth in the NCAA tournament. In the spring of 1959, Fleming earned a degree as a construction engineer. When Paul Brown, owner-coach of the Cleveland Browns, traded for Fleming's NFL rights, Fleming bypassed signing with the baseball Baltimore Orioles and decided to play professional football. Despite never having played defensive back, he started as a rookie with the Browns at safety and made the NFL All-Rookie team in 1960. After his third season with the Browns, Fleming was named to the All-NFL first team. In that off-season, while working on a construction job building at a bank in Florida, Fleming was killed in an electrical accident. Born June 11, 1937, Fleming was just 25 years old at the time of his passing. Despite having played just three seasons with the Browns, he had such an impact on the franchise that they named their practice field, Fleming Field, in his honor and retired No. 46, which was his number. The University of Florida named its intramural field, Fleming Field, and the Florida Alumni Association established an award in his name that is given annually to the senior in any sport exemplifying the best leadership qualities. He also was selected for induction into the University of Florida's Hall of Fame and is a member of the State of Florida's Athletic Hall of Fame. Shadyside High School retired his number (59) and named its athletic complex Fleming Field.

John Reger (Athlete - 1950s)



John Reger (Linsly High School, Class of 1950). This all-OVAC honoree in football and basketball was inducted into the Wheeling City Hall of Fame in 1998.

Reger's football achievements were remarkable considering that he was less than six-feet tall and weighed just 125 pounds when he began competing as a high school athlete, but he had more important attributes such as a huge, competitive heart and the determination of a youth twice his size. He played fullback and linebacker at Linsly and captained the 1949 Cadet squad that lost just one game to Triadelphia (20-19) in what was regarded as the most memorable high school football contest played during that era at Wheeling Island Stadium.

Reger went on to the University of Pittsburgh on a football scholarship and his freshman team in 1950 went undefeated. After just three varsity games the following year, his collegiate career was ended by a knee injury. The Wheeling native returned home and was working in a gasoline station when his former high school coach, Etz Rine, arranged a tryout for him with the Pittsburgh Steelers even though he had not played football in three years. Displaying the same grit and determination he had shown in high school, Reger opened the 1995 season as one of the Steelers' starting linebackers. During his nine seasons in Pittsburgh, Reger earned three Pro Bowl invitations. He became captain of the Steelers defensive unit and was voted as the team's MVP during the 1959 season. Reger played in his first Pro Bowl in 1960 and made two more appearances in 1961 and 1962.

He sustained a life-threatening and near career-ending injury during his final season in Pittsburgh during a game against the Eagles at Franklin Field in Philadelphia. Reger was hit in the head and had a spasm in his throat that cut off air. Fortunately, the ambulance they sent for included oxygen and he was revived. Following that harrowing incident, every team in the NFL was required to have oxygen on the sidelines.

Reger was placed on waivers by the Steelers prior to the start of the regular season in 1964 and he was picked up by the Washington Redskins, for whom he played three more years before retiring. Overall, he played 12 seasons in the NFL.

Bob Kelley (Athlete - 1960s)



Bob Kelley (Weir High School, Class of 1961). Kelley made the most of his gifted and speedy legs to carve his niche into the Weir High and OVAC record books in two sports. He was a star both on the gridiron and the track cinders for the Red Riders.

Kelley — coached by the legendary Jim Carey — rushed for 2,730 yards and 42 career touchdowns. Kelley led Weir to a 10-1 season and the West Virginia state championship in 1960. He gained 1,259 yards that year with 22 touchdowns.

In the 40-0 rout of Nitro in the state championship game, Kelley was a one-man wrecking crew. He tallied four TDs and passed for a fifth.

Kelley was also a two-way starter as a junior for the Red Riders. He was the second underclassmen in state history to receive the Kennedy Award (1959), bestowed each year on the state's premier prep football player, and the first winner from the OVAC. The first-team all-West Virginia and all-OVAC honoree captured the Wigwam and Scholastic Magazine All-American honors as the Red Riders were ranked 11th nationally. He played in the OVAC All-Star Game and left with Most Valuable Player accolades.

Kelley also made his mark in track his senior season. He established a Steel Valley League record of 9.95 seconds for the 100-yard dash and an OVAC meet standard of 10.1 seconds at the same distance.

He was voted most valuable performer at the OVAC meet where he won three gold medals and one silver. He went on to win four regional track titles and four more medals in the state meet, including second place in the 100-yard dash.

After graduation from Weir, Kelley matriculated to Cameron Junior College in Oklahoma. He led the Aggies to the JUCO championship, beating Bakersfield, 28-20, in a game played in the Rose Bowl. Kelley led Cameron with 712 yards on the season, earning first-team all-Oklahoma Conference team honors. He was also honored on the 1961 Junior College Helms Athletic Foundation All-American team as a first-team halfback.

He later attended Oklahoma State and Colorado, but was sidelined due to injuries.

Robert 'Bo' McConnaughy (Athlete - 1960s)



Robert 'Bo' McConnaughy (Wheeling Central High School, Class of 1966). He was a two-sport phenom for the Maroon Knights in the mid 1960s, starring in basketball and baseball.

McConnaughy was a four-year letterman in both sports, gaining first-team all-state honors in baseball as a senior. That same year he garnered second-team all-West Virginia laurels in hoops after helping lead the Maroon Knights to the West Virginia Catholic Tournament title.

In baseball, McConnaughy is considered one of the best shortstops the Ohio Valley prep ranks has ever produced. He went on to star at West Liberty State College in both sports.

In 1970, McConnaughy was named first-team all-WVIAC as a shortstop and shortly thereafter signed a professional contract with the Baltimore Orioles. A year previously, he was drafted by the Cincinnati Reds in the 24th round, five rounds ahead of Ken Griffey, Sr.

He spent three years in the Orioles' farm system before returning home and starring for the Warwood Reds of the Ohio Valley Baseball League.

Bo was a second-team all-conference selection as a senior for the Hilltoppers' hoop team.

McConnaughy has maintained his relationship with West Liberty, finishing up his 25th year at the Hilltoppers' baseball helm.

He has accumulated more than 500 wins at his alma mater to go with five conference crowns and a berth in the 1990 NAIA World Series. McConnaughy led the Black & Gold to their first-ever NCAA Regional Playoffs in 1998.

McConnaughy was elected to the West Liberty State College Hall of Fame in 1988. He has been named WVIAC Coach-of-The-Year on four occasions.

In addition to baseball, he has coached football, track and men's and women's basketball at West Liberty. He is currently in charge of the WLSC Intramurals Program.

Gene Cattane (Athlete - 1970s)



Gene Cattane (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 1977). Cattane put together an impressive four-year career on the diamond as a shortstop and pitcher for the Red Devils.

Some 30 years later, he still ranks in Ohio's top 10 in two statistical categories — No. 4 on the all-time career hit list with 172 and No. 7 in RBI with 145. In 109 varsity games, Cattane's career numbers also included a batting average of .431 with 127 runs scored, 29 home runs, 13 triples and 25 doubles. As a pitcher, he compiled a 14-11 career record.

He was a four-time all-Valley selection (second team as a freshman and first team the next three years, including serving as captain as a senior) and he was selected to participate in four Eastern Ohio Baseball League All-Star Games. Cattane was also tabbed for the Ohio All-Star Series in Columbus, equivalent to gaining all-state honors at that time.

As a senior, Cattane helped the Red Devils to the OVAC Class 3-A championship and a 23-9 overall record. He batted .478 (fifth in the valley) with valley-leading totals of 54 hits, 10 home runs, 38 RBI and 35 runs scored. He also had four triples, six doubles and 16 stolen bases. On the mound, he was 6-2 with a 1.73 E.R.A. in 52.2 innings, striking out 71 while walking 27 and allowing 31 hits. Cattane's junior numbers included a .455 average (fifth in the OVAC) with valley bests in home runs (8) and RBI (36) along with 40 hits, five doubles, three triples and 26 runs scored. As a sophomore, he hit .349 with valley highs in home runs (9) and RBI (46) along with 38 hits, four doubles, three triples and 32 runs scored. His freshman totals included a .449 average (fourth in the OVAC) and valley-leading marks in hits (40) and runs scored (34) along with 10 doubles, three triples, two home runs and 25 RBI.

In addition to his high school exploits, Cattane was also a standout American Legion player. He was named Ohio American Legion Player of the Year in 1976 after leading Maynard Post 666 to a state runner-up finish with a 28-7 record, batting .350 for the season including .433 in seven tournament games. He also played for more than 10 years with Maynard of the Ohio Valley Baseball League and was a perennial all-star.

Cattane, inducted into the St. C. Hall of Fame in 2006, died in a coal mining accident on Sept. 10, 1990 at the age of 31.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

John Leon (Athlete - 1970s)



John Leon (Brooke High School, Class of 1976). This Bruin starred in three sports, etching his name into the OVAC annals as one of the premier football linemen and track weightmen ever to compete in the conference.

Leon — who was also a standout grappler at Brooke — was a two-way line star for the powerful Bruins, earning a myriad of all-star accolades, including the 1975 Ken Hunt Award, going to the Lineman of the Year in West Virginia, making Leon the first OVAC winner of the prestigious honor.

Leon led Brooke to a 9-1 season en route to the OVAC championship in his junior campaign before earning all-conference and all-state laurels as a senior. The powerful Leon played in the 1976 OVAC All-Star game, captaining the Mountaineers to victory.

He was just as impressive in track circles, rewriting the OVAC record books in the shot put and discus. In the 1976 state meet, Leon launched the iron ball 59-1, breaking the W. Va. standard by some two feet. The record lasted two years before being eclipsed by future Olympian Randy Barnes. Leon won three state throwing titles, two in the shotput and one in the discus.

Leon was also a force on the mats, compiling a 48-6 mark as a junior and senior heavyweight.

Upon graduation from Brooke, Leon accepted a football scholarship to Notre Dame. He was a three-year letterman for the Fighting Irish as a guard. The Irish won two Cotton Bowls and one Gator Bowl during his career at South Bend. After graduating from Notre Dame, he received his MD degree from West Virginia University in 1984.

He has been a radiologist for 20 years. He is the current president of Radiological Physicians Associates. He is past president of the West Virginia Radiological Society, past president of the Marion County Medical Society as well as past president of the Fairmont Field Club.

Leon and his wife Marcy have been married for 22 years. They have four children: Johnny, Camille, Isabella and Joseph.

Jennifer Hyland Brown (Athlete - 1980s)



Jennifer Hyland Brown (River High School, Class of 1986). She ranks among the all-time greats in girls' track, having excelled at the conference, league and state levels of competition as a sprinter.

In four years at OVAC Championship meets, Hyland scored a whopping 126 points as River won two Class 2-A team titles (1983 and '86) and finished as runner-up twice (1984 and '85). During her freshman, sophomore and junior years, she won the 100, 200 and 400-meters and was on the winning 1600-meter relay team. While as a senior, she won the 400 and 1600-relay and was second in the 100 and 200.

In state meet competition, Hyland was the 400-meter runner-up as a freshman in 1983; first in the 400, second in the 100 and third in the 200 as a sophomore in 1984 (her 24 points single-handedly gave River a third place finish in the state); first in the 400 as a junior in 1985; and first in the 400 with a state-record time of 55.65, and on the sixth place 1600-meter relay team as a senior in 1986.

Hyland also sparkled in Ohio Valley Track League (OVTL) Championship meets for the Lady Pilots, winning the 200 and 400 all four years while taking the 100 the last three.

She also enjoyed tremendous success in the Belmont County Relays, finishing as the top scorer as a sophomore after winning the 100, 200 and 400; duplicating the top scorer feat as a junior by winning the same three events (including a meet record in the 200); and scoring the same "triple" as a senior (bettering her mark in the 200).

She was selected All-Ohio in the 400-meters all four years by the Ohio Association of Track and Cross Country Coaches. She was also an All-District and All-Valley honoree in multiple events. In 1984, Hyland was named honorable mention High School All-America and in 1986, she was invited to participate in the Midwest Meet of Champions in Indiana, an event showcasing the best senior athletes from Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

A member of the River High School Wall of Fame, she received a scholarship to run track at West Virginia University where she competed for one season.

Anthony Reed (Athlete - 1980s)



Anthony Reed (Wheeling Park High School, Class of 1989). Reed left a lasting mark on the athletic scene both for the Patriots and the OVAC, evident when he became the first person inducted into the Wheeling Park Sports Hall of Fame in 1997 for his exploits in basketball and track.

On the basketball court, Reed was a two-time first team All-W.Va. Class AAA selection, serving as captain as a junior. He was a two-time USA Today W.Va. Player of the Year and the Gatorade State Player of the Year as a senior. He also gained first team All-OVAC and All-Valley accolades twice and was a tri-captain on The Intelligencer's all-decade team of the 1980s.

The 6-4 wing scored 1,290 points in two seasons, including what still stands as a school-record 663 points (a 28.9 per-game average) as a senior. He averaged 11.5 rebounds per game that year and also set what was then an OVAC-record 88 three-point goals as a senior. As a junior, Reed was selected to the West Virginia Class AAA All-Tournament team.

In track, the talented Reed was a stellar performer in the high jump, hurdles and relays.

A two-time West Virginia Class AAA state champion in the high jump (including a meet-record 6 ft. 9 in. effort), he also set what was then a valley-record with a 6 ft. 11 in. leap. Reed placed second in the 110-meter high hurdles at the state meet (14.65 seconds) and was on state championship relay teams to help Park finish a close second in the Class AAA state meet in 1989.

The Park product also made his presence felt at the collegiate level, starting and lettering for three years at Cleveland State University. He scored 1,090 points (ranking him 10th on the all-time CSU scoring list at the time), averaging 15.6 points per game as a senior to earn second team All-Mid Continent Conference accolades. As a junior, he averaged 13.2 points per game and received the Paul Stewart Award presented to the player whose unsung contributions did the most to further the success of the team. Reed also won the Mid-Continent Conference high jump championship as a junior.

Jose Davis (Athlete - 1990s)



Jose Davis (Bellaire High School, Class of 1996). Davis put together some eye-popping numbers in both football and basketball, earning him All-Ohio recognition in both sports during his stellar career.

On the gridiron, Davis was a three-year starter at quarterback, leading his team to a record of 30-5. As a senior, he led the Big Reds to a third straight OVAC Class 3-A championship, first undefeated regular season and first-ever OHSAA playoff appearance (Bellaire advanced to the Division IV state championship game, losing a 50-44 double-OT thriller to Versailles). He finished the season 253-of-406 passing for 3,551 yards and 32 TDs while adding another 10 scores rushing. Davis earned All-Ohio Division IV Offensive Player of the Year honors and was runner-up for the prestigious Mr. Football award as a senior. He also received first team All-Eastern District, All-OVAC Class 3-A and All-Valley big school accolades on multiple occasions. The talented signal-caller set BHS career records for most yards gained (7.306), pass attempts (790), pass completions (455), highest completion percentage (55.7), passing yards (6,769) and TD passes (60).

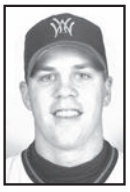
On the hardwood, Davis started and lettered four years, racking up 1,457 points, 479 rebounds, 167 assists and 151 steals (all ranking in the top five on the BHS career list). His all-star accolades in basketball included first team All-Ohio Division III, All-Eastern District, All-OVAC Class 3-A and All-Valley big school. He was also named third team All-American as a senior.

Also a three-year letterman in baseball at Bellaire, Davis continued his career at Kent State University. A three-year starter and letterman for the Golden Flashes in football, he put up equally impressive numbers including single-game record for most pass attempts (59), completions (34) and TD passes (7); single-season marks for offensive yards (2,883), pass attempts (365), pass completions (194), passing yards (2,707) and TD passes (32); and career records for offensive yards (7,731), passing yards (6,722) and TD passes (52). He had a Mid-American Conference record 551 yards passing in 1997 against Central Florida and when he left KSU, he ranked 10th in MAC history in passing yards and was third in TD passes.

Davis also doubled as point guard on the Kent State basketball team in 1997-98.

Professionally, Davis played for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers of the Canadian Football League in 2000 and 2001; for the Ohio Valley Greyhounds of the National Indoor Football League in 2002, leading the team to the league title by passing for 1,668 yards and 37 TDs and earning championship game MVP honors; for the Indiana Firebirds of the Arena Football League in 2003, the Colorado Crush in 2004 and 2005; and the Grand Rapids Rampage in 2006.

Chris Enochs (Athlete - 1990s)



Chris Enochs (Oak Glen High School, Class of 1994). Enochs excelled in three sports for the Golden Bears, but it was baseball where he would make his biggest impact.

Enochs' senior season diamond exploits earned him first team all-West Virginia Class AA accolades and he was named the "Player of the Year" by both Gatorade and USA Today and was selected as the runner-up for that honor by the W. Va. Sportswriters Association.

Also a first team all-OVAC Class 3-A first teamer and "Player of the Year" and an all-Valley first teamer and "big school" captain, Enochs led the valley with 11 home runs and 42 RBI while batting .442. His pitching totals included a 6-4 record and a 1.22 E.R.A. with 106 strikeouts and 26 walks in 63 innings. He pitched a perfect game for Oak Glen against Toronto.

On the basketball court, Enochs was first team all-OVAC and all-Valley and was an honorable mention all-West Virginia Class AA choice. He averaged 19.2 points and 13.2 rebounds per game as a senior and finished his career with 1,047 points.

On the football field, Enochs earned first team all-West Virginia Class AA as a quarterback after leading Oak Glen to its first-ever WVSSAC playoff appearance. Also a first team all-OVAC Class 3-A and all-Valley pick, he led the valley with 1,729 passing yards.

Drafted by the Cleveland Indians in 1994, Enochs opted for a scholarship to West Virginia University where he became the Big East "Pitcher of the Year", first team All-East Region and was a second team All-American pick by Baseball America, The Sporting News and the National Collegiate Baseball Writers. Named the team's co-MVP, he was 12-1 on the mound with a 3.03 E.R.A. and 10 complete games, including a no-hitter against Villanova. As a junior he was named the Big East Tournament's MVP and Outstanding Pitcher. Enochs had 21 wins, including 14 complete games, in his three-year Mountaineer career.

Following his junior year, he became the highest drafted player in OVAC history, selected No. 11 in the first round by the Oakland Athletics in 1997. The 6-3, 225-pound right-hander with a 93-mile per hour fastball played nine seasons in the minor leagues, the first seven in the Oakland organization and then one year each for Houston and Pittsburgh. He pitched in 250 games with a 45-52 record and a 4.91 E.R.A., posting 661 strikeouts while walking 380. He was a member of the Class AAA Pacific Coast League champion Sacramento Rivercats and played for the Puerto Rican Winter League champion Ponce Leones.

Enochs also played for Team USA, winning a silver medal at the 2001 World Cup in Taiwan.

OVAC Museum Seeks Memorabilia

The Ohio Valley Athletic Conference, the nation's largest high school conference, established an OVAC Museum in the outer concourse of WesBanco Arena to display memorabilia from its member schools - past and present - and is always seeking additional display items. Each school has a display case for its trophies, photographs and other items to showcase its athletic history.
If you have something to contribute, call 740-391-2930.

Class of 2008

OVAC Hall of Fame

Sponsored by Robinson Auto Group

Bob Hedmond (OVAC 'Family')



Robert L. "Bob" Hedmond (Follansbee High School, Class of 1948). During his high school days, Hedmond was a varsity letterman in football, track, baseball and basketball. He won the half-mile title and played in the 1948 OVAC Charity All-Star Football Game in which he sustained torn knee cartilage.

After spending 21 months in the military, Hedmond enrolled at Shepherd College where he played fullback and defensive end before graduating in 1954.

In coaching, Hedmond met with success at every stop. He was especially adept at starting neophyte programs or rebuilding teams that needed a spark. He coached football, track and/or wrestling at several schools, including Oxon Hill (Md.), East Liverpool, Brooke and Steubenville. Hedmond started the program at Oxon Hill and took his team from an 0-5-4 record the first year to a 5-3-1. He became the first head football coach at the consolidated Brooke High School in 1969 and led the Bruins to an OVAC championship. Hedmond took over at Steubenville in 1981 and directed the Jefferson County squad for two years. His teams compiled an 18-4 record and qualified for Big Red's first two post-season berths since Ohio adopted a playoff system in the 1970s. While at East Liverpool, Hedmond lettered 18 sophomores as the Potters turned in a 3-7 record. The following season, they rebounded to finish at 7-3. Overall, his record as a head football coach was 44-22-5. During his time as track coach with the Potters, his teams went through four straight seasons without losing a dual meet.

Successful as he was with a coaching whistle around his neck, Hedmond was even more effective as an administrator. Within the OVAC, he served as a class representative, was a long-time member of the OVAC Foundation Executive Board and, for several years, he directed giant OVAC Wrestling Tournament. Hedmond served as Athletic Director at Steubenville High School and later was the Building and Grounds Superintendent with Steubenville City Schools. Among his numerous honors were the Carl Hamill Memorial Award, presented by the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club; OVAC Mr. Mat Award; Ohio Eastern District Coach of the Year; Eastern District Athletic Director of the Year and an Outstanding Achievement Award from Dapper Dan. Before his passing, Hedmond was inducted into the Ohio Athletic Administrators Hall of Fame.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

James 'Jimmy' Stewart (Media)



James C. "Jimmy" Stewart (Triadelphia High School, Class of 1918). Stewart devoted nearly a half-century to the newspaper profession, serving with great distinction.

He began his career associated with the Wheeling News and The Register, which then were separate newspapers. Stewart was sports editor of the now-defunct Wheeling Telegraph from 1921 through 1929 and later became the sports editor of the News-Register. He eventually concluded his long career as the associate sports editor of the N-R where he worked alongside fellow Hall of Famer Bill Van Horne.

In the early years of the OVAC, the conference perhaps had no greater friend than "Jimmy" Stewart, this according to Van Horne himself. Beginning in 1943, Stewart kept the weekly standings on football and basketball until his retirement on December 31, 1968. Stewart also painstakingly kept record books that proved invaluable to anyone interested in Ohio Valley sports lore. He also was recognized as a walking encyclopedia on local athletics. His head was a storehouse of sports information. What wasn't committed to his memory could be found in his pocket-sized record books and envelopes which filled his desk and filing cabinet.

Beginning in the early 1920s, Stewart's "Lookin' Em Over" column was one of the most widely-read throughout the area. In later years, he penned a golf column, "The 19th Hole," which appeared in the newspaper every Sunday from the spring months into the fall. He also initiated a popular Monday column on area collegiate sports which he titled, "With the Colleges."

He was also involved with the scheduling of basketball games worked by members of the Ohio Valley Board of Approved Basketball Officials. His love of sandlot baseball was well known, as he almost meticulously covered happenings in the old Intelligencer and United Mine Workers baseball leagues.

A quiet man who never cast himself in the limelight during his career, Stewart was honored with a special award at the time of his retirement from an appreciative Ohio Valley Athletic Conference. He also received an award of appreciation from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club.

John Craig (Coaches)



John Craig (Follansbee High School, Class of 1967). Craig enjoyed an illustrious 26-year career as a head wrestling coach, including two seasons at Hillsboro (Ohio) High School, 18 years at Steubenville Big Red and five years at Indian Creek High School in Wintersville.

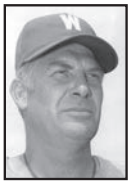
While at Big Red, his teams earned six overall championships in the OVAC Wrestling Tournament. Steubenville also captured seven divisional titles and finished in the top three a total of 13 times at the conference championship event. Thirty-one of his Big Red matmen earned individual conference titles. He had 87 qualifiers for the Ohio state meet, five of whom earned individual championships, and 23 who were state place-winners. His team finished in the top five at the Ohio state tournament four times, including a runner-up finish in 1988.

Craig's 1989 squad finished the regular season ranked No. 1 in The Associated Press Division II wrestling poll and placed third at the state tournament. His overall dual meet record was 201-74-3 and he coached his teams to 42 tournament championships, including nine district titles. Four times, his teams turned in undefeated dual meet records. Several of his former wrestlers went on to compete in college at schools such as Ohio State, Purdue, Army, Navy and West Liberty. One of his protégés won a Big 10 championship and others were place-winners in the NCAA Division I, II, III and NAIA national tournaments.

Craig was named OVAC Wrestling Coach of the Year on five occasions and was presented the prestigious "Mr. Mat Award" in 2002. He is a member of the Ohio Wrestling Coaches and the West Liberty State College Athletic Halls of Fame. In 1989, he was selected as the East-Southeast Wrestling Coach of the Year and the Ohio Division II Coach of the Year. For 21 years, Craig served as a wrestling official on the youth, junior high, high school, college and open levels. As a principal at Indian Creek, he was one of the founders of the Buckeye 8 Athletic League.

As an athlete, Craig wrestled at Follansbee High School and was a three-year letterman at West Liberty where he earned WVIAC championships three times and twice was the MVP in the conference tournament. In 1972, Craig was the runner-up in the NAIA national meet, where he earned All-American honors.

Robert 'Bob' Kettlewell (Coaches)



Robert S. "Bob" Kettlewell (Linsly Military Institute, Class of 1947). During his 20 years as the head coach at Wintersville High School (1956-75), Kettlewell's teams posted a 143-40-10 record, the third-best winning percentage in Ohio Valley history for coaches with 100 or more wins. His teams earned nine league championships (four in the Big Eight and five OVAC titles). Wintersville won its first OVAC crown under Kettlewell in 1956, got its second in 1966 and then captured three in a row from 1970 through 1972, which equaled a record held previously by Bellaire and Martins Ferry.

Kettlewell had three undefeated teams at Wintersville — 1957, 1967 and 1972 — and seven clubs that sustained just one loss. From 1966 through '73, the Warriors lost only 11 games. Under Kettlewell's direction, Wintersville scored in a record 140 straight games, ending with a scoreless tie against Bellaire in a contest that saw the Gold Warriors denied what would have been a game-winning and streak-continuing touchdown because of a penalty.

Among the stars coached by this highly-regarded mentor was Donnie Young, the Ohio Valley career rushing record holder. Among the other numerous college athletic football standouts tutored by Kettlewell were Ohio State captain Alan Jack who played on an undefeated Rose Bowl team with the Buckeyes, and Roger Alford, the first black to sign at West Virginia University.

Kettlewell also was a standout athlete while playing at Linsly Military Institute. He lettered in four sports and played football at West Virginia University, where he also lettered.

Indian Creek High School's (formerly Wintersville High) football facility was renamed "Bob Kettlewell Memorial Stadium" in his honor. In 1990, Bob was the fourth Ohio Valley coach inducted into the Ohio Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame. He joined the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame in 1987.

William 'Bill' Thomas (Officials)



William D. "Bill" Thomas (Bellaire High School, Class of 1952). During a 48-year career as a track official, Thomas served as the meet referee for nearly every major championship in the Ohio Valley. The list includes the Martins Ferry and Shadyside Relays; the St. Clairsville, Barnesville and Wheeling Park Invitationals; Cal Giffin Track Classic; various OVAC championship meets; West Virginia Regionals and the Ohio High School Athletic Association Eastern Sectional and District meets.

He was a meet official for 10 OVAC schools, including Bellaire, Barnesville, Cambridge, John Marshall, Martins Ferry, Shadyside, Skyvue, St. Clairsville, Wheeling Park and Union Local and Thomas also worked as a meet official at the Mansfield Relays (15 years); Bellaire Relays (48 years); Ohio regional championships (10 years) and the Ohio high school state meets for boys and girls (15 years). Thomas also served as meet director as numerous Buckeye State district and regional events, along with the OVAC Track Championships.

He received the OVAC Cal Giffin Award for service to track and field in 1983; was honorary referee at the Bellaire Relays in 1996 and was honored again during the 50-year celebration of the famed Bellaire meet in 2004. The former Bellaire High athletic great is a member of the school's Wall of Fame.

Thomas attend Mississippi State on a football scholarship and also lettered there in track his freshman year. After two years with the Bulldogs, he entered the Army and served overseas before coming home and playing on the 1956 National Service football championship team, coached by Don Coryell, who later coached the San Diego Chargers. Thomas finished his college career at West Liberty State College where he lettered in football and baseball. He also had a long and successful career in coaching. He spent five years as an assistant in football and basketball at Bellaire High. After that tenure, he went to St. Clairsville as head baseball coach and an assistant in football and basketball. Bill later spent five years as head football coach at Barnesville before becoming athletic director at Bellaire in 1973. He served as head coach at Union Local from 1978 until 1981 when he returned to Bellaire as a teacher until retiring in 1989.

Tom Keane (Athlete - 1940s)



Tom Keane (Linsly Military Institute, Class of 1944). The Bellaire native was a multi-sport standout for the Cadets and earned All-OVAC basketball and football on the first selections in 1943-44. He also was an All-City basketball selection. As a senior on a 7-4 record Cadet football team, the two-way back and punter returned a pass interception 106 yards to score in an 18-6 win over Warwood.

He enrolled at Ohio State where he lettered as a freshman before serving 20 months in the U.S. Navy.

Upon discharge, he enrolled at West Virginia University and lettered in 1946 and 1947, becoming a rare letterman at both OSU and WVU.

Keane was a third round pick and 18th overall National Football League Draft selection by the Los Angeles Rams in 1948. He played eight NFL seasons, and 87 games, as a defensive back-offensive end including the first four with the Rams. In 1952, he played with the Dallas Texans before two years with the Baltimore Colts and ended his career in 1955 with the Chicago Cardinals. He was a two-time All-Pro and played in the 1953 Pro Bowl, ranked second in the NFL in pass interceptions twice, and played in three NFL championship games including the 1951 Rams' title team. From 1948-52, both Keane brothers competed in the NFL.

He was a long-time assistant coach in the NFL including Chicago Cardinals from 1957-59, Pittsburgh 1965 and was an original member of the Miami Dolphins' staff in 1966 where he remained through 1985 as defensive backs and special teams coach. In 1962, he became the first head coach of the Wheeling Ironmen and served until joining the Steelers' staff. The Ironmen went 9-4 in 1962 before winning the United Football League title with a 12-1 record in 1963. In 1964, the Ironmen were 7-7.

Keane died at age 74 in 2001.

Nick Mumley (Athlete - 1950s)



Nick Mumley (Wheeling High School, Class of 1955). One of the most honored three-sport athletes in the long history of Wheeling High, he starred in football, basketball and track, earning three varsity letters in each.

He was first team All-State in football as a two-way end and he also received All-OVAC and All-City accolades.

In basketball, he was first team all-class All-West Virginia as a senior and was a two-time All-OVAC and All-City first team selection. He scored 15.8 points per game as a junior and 24.3 per outing as a senior.

As a Wildcat senior in 1955, the 6-foot-6 center was the anchor of the final team coached by OVAC Legends' honoree Everett Brinkman which won its first 18 games before bowing in the regular season finale at Bellaire. The OVAC title-winning team won the sectional and regional titles before bowing in the first round of the state tournament to Mullens to finish with a 22-2 record.

He also scored 30 points in a record-setting 146-110 victory over Weir High at Madison Gymnasium, a game which set Ohio Valley and West Virginia marks for combined points in a game (256).

In track, he won two state one-class shot put titles with marks of 51-3 1/2 in 1955 and 52-2 3/4 in 1954 and two OVAC shot put crowns, including a conference-record toss of 53-5 1/2.

He earned a football scholarship to Purdue University, where he lettered three years as a regular two-way end.

He was the 51st overall NFL draft pick in 1959 by the Philadelphia Eagles, but opted to play in the new American Football League where he competed three seasons from 1960-62 with the New York Titans, a forerunner of the Jets, as a defensive end-offensive tackle. He played in a total of 42 AFL games.

Tom Yakubowski (Athlete - 1950s)



Tom Yakubowski (Adena High School, Class of 1958). A three-sport standout for the Golden Wave who starred in the first year the school joined the conference, which expanded to three classes in 1957-58.

At Adena, he was a three-sport team captain in football, basketball and baseball and earned 10 letters— four in baseball and three each in basketball and football.

The 1957 Adena football team went 6-2-2 and won the OVAC Class A crown. He was a fullback-linebacker-quarterback in football and an All-OVAC, All-Valley Small School and All-East Ohio Athletic League selection. He was the MVP of the 1958 Ohio-W.Va. All-Star game won by Ohio, 25-0. He scored 13 points and starred as fullback-linebacker.

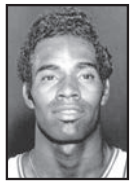
In basketball, he was a two-time All-East Ohio Athletic League honoree and averaged in double figures for three seasons, including 11.3 points per game as a sophomore; 17.5 points as a junior and 19.2 points as a senior.

In baseball, the pitcher-infielder was an All-Ohio selection as a senior and he also pitched in the East-West All-Star game in Columbus. He led the Golden Wave to a 12-1 record, losing in the regional finals to Northwestern High and future Major League pitcher Dean Chance. He tossed two one-hitters in a three-day span and had 32 2/3 consecutive scoreless innings in tournament play, which ranks second in the Ohio High School record book.

He earned a football scholarship to Purdue University, where he lettered as a sophomore and senior fullback-linebacker while suffering a series of knee injuries. He was second on the team in rushing (310 yards) as a sophomore. He also played baseball one season at Purdue.

Yakubowski competed in the 1962 Blue-Gray All-Star Football Game and tried out as a free agent with the Buffalo Bills.

Bill Kennedy (Athlete - 1960s)



Bill Kennedy (Warwood High School, Class of 1967). Basketball and Bill Kennedy are synonymous. Some four-plus decades since starring at old Warwood High School, basketball still is a major part of his life.

Kennedy enjoyed a stellar prep career with the Vikings. The dazzling 6 ft. 2 guard led Warwood to state Class AA basketball tournament appearances in both the 1966 and '67 campaigns. He capped his prep hoop career by sparking the Vikings to the school's only state basketball crown. That team finished with a stellar 24-2 mark, including closing the season on a 15-game victory run. Warwood captured its first OVAC hoop title in 21 years, with Kennedy providing much of the firepower with his 26.2 points per game average.

The explosive backcourt dandy garnered first-team All-West Virginia, All-OVAC, and All-City plaudits. Just a season prior, Kennedy led the Vikings to a 22-4 mark and the state semifinals before being eliminated by Mullens. He was a first-team All-OVAC honoree that year and was named an all-state tournament selection, an honor he duplicated as a senior. Kennedy finished his illustrious Vikings' basketball career with more than 1,200 points. He was also an accomplished high jumper, as reflected in his third-place finish in the state Class AA meet as a senior.

His basketball achievements earned him a spot with the West Liberty State College basketball team. He wasted no time in making his mark for the Hilltoppers, leading the team in scoring in both his freshman and sophomore seasons with 509 and 445 points, respectively. Kennedy earned all-WVIAC and all-tournament plaudits as a freshman.

His two years of impressive play with WLSC provided a springboard to a transfer to Arizona State University for the 1971 and '72 seasons. Kennedy proved he was no small-school wonder as he led the Sun Devils in scoring both seasons, averaging 14.8 and 14.6 points per game, respectively. His two-year point total of 765 is the ninth best for a Sun Devil in a two-year career. All told, he scored 1,719 on the collegiate level.

His play at Arizona State caught the eyes of professional scouts. He was drafted by Memphis of the ABA, but opted for a career as a basketball official. Kennedy, who still resides in the Phoenix area, continues to be a Pac-10 college basketball official.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Bob Rieves (Athlete - 1960s)



Bob Rieves (Wheeling High School, Class of 1969). Some 40 years after running his final prep race, Rieves remains the measuring stick for sprint greatness in the Ohio Valley. The 156-pound mercurial-heeled rocket was nothing short of sensational during his career with the Wildcats.

Rieves was nearly untouchable his final two years in the high school ranks.

As a senior, Rieves turned in a performance that still ranks with the all-time great OVAC running fetes. He broke two state records in the state championship meet while tying a third.

He blistered the 220-yard dash in a new state standard of 21.5 while he smashed the 440 mark by 1.2 seconds via his 47.7 clocking. Rieves' scintillating 9.8 in the 100 equaled the state record. His assault on the state records resulted in him becoming the first OVAC athlete in 28 years to be the state meet's high scorer.

Rieves was also the West Virginia state champion in the 220 as a junior.

The Wildcat star captured five individual OVAC sprint gold medals in his final two years of high school. His impressive efforts helped lead Wheeling High to the 1969 OVAC team championship, the school's first such title in 23 years.

His sprinting dominance is reflected in the fact that he was undefeated as a senior in the 220 and 440 and was never worse than second in the 100 in that time. He tied for high-point honors in the prestigious Bellaire Relays his senior year while being the high scorer in every other meet that spring.

Rieves' sprinting accomplishments were so impressive that his track jersey was retired at the annual Wheeling High awards assembly.

Rieves earned a track scholarship to West Virginia University. He competed for two seasons for the Mountaineers. He earned his bachelor of science degree in landscape architecture. He now resides in Brooklyn and is employed by the New York City Parks & Recreation Department as a capital projects analyst.

Mike Kovalick (Athlete - 1970s)



Mike Kovalick (Bellaire High School, Class of 1975). Kovalick has the distinction of not only being a two-sport standout, but also a two-state standout.

Kovalick, the son of legendary coach George Kovalick, was a prep grid and mat performer for three years at Weir High before matriculating to Bellaire High for his senior year. Both schools benefited from his prowess on the gridiron and on the mat.

Kovalick is a rare state champion wrestler in both West Virginia and Ohio. He turned the trick in the Mountain State as a junior for the Red Riders and capped his prep mat career with a state championship in the Buckeye State for the Big Reds. Both wrestling crowns came in the 185-pound classification.

The powerful matman was near-perfect his final two years on the mat. He won 27 of 28 matches as a junior before running the table in all 28 bouts as senior. He was an OVAC champion both winters after placing fifth as a sophomore.

He finished his illustrious wrestling career with a stellar 64-3-2 mark.

Kovalick continued his mat success on the collegiate Division I level. He wrestled for Bobby Douglas at Arizona State. Kovalick finished as PAC-10 runner-up at 190 pounds in his senior season.

Kovalick — Bellaire High's first-ever state wrestling champion — was inducted into the school's Hall of Fame in 1983.

He was also an all-star performer in football. The two-way lineman anchored the Weir High trenches his sophomore and junior years and filled the same role for Bellaire in 1974.

Kovalick earned all-Valley and all-OVAC honors his final two years. Moreover, he was named all-Ohio in football his senior campaign and he played in the OVAC All-Star Game.

Kovalick resides in Wheeling.

Joe Pettini (Athlete - 1970s)



Joe Pettini (Brooke High School, Class of 1973). Pettini is without question on the short list of the greatest prep baseball players in Ohio Valley annals. His high school diamond resume is overflowing with accomplishments which led to a sparkling collegiate career at Mercer University.

The multi-talented Pettini started every game during his Brooke High career, some 140 contests. He didn't skip a beat at Mercer, starting all 196 games for the Macon, Georgia-based institution.

Pettini not only enjoyed individual success in his prep career, he also led the Bruins to a coveted state baseball championship. He was a two-time first-team all-West Virginia selection and was twice named captain of the all-Valley squad. He earned the distinction of being captain of both the all-Valley and all-OVAC teams as a senior.

After his brilliant Mercer career, Pettini was signed as a non-drafted free agent with the Montreal Expos in 1977. He was later traded to San Francisco, playing four seasons with the Giants. Pettini finished his professional baseball career by playing three years with the Class AAA Louisville Redbirds.

He then entered the coaching ranks, holding several different posts. His managerial career commenced with Hamilton, Ontario in 1989. He moved to St. Petersburg for the 1990 season and in Arkansas for three seasons. Pettini ended his minor league managerial career by guiding the Louisville Redbirds to the American Association championship.

Pettini gained a plum assignment in 2002 when St. Cardinals' manager Tony LaRussa tabbed Pettini to be his bench coach, a position he still holds today. He attained the ultimate in 2006, gaining a World Series championship ring with the Cardinals.

Joe and his wife Barbara have two children, Michelle (25) and Joseph James (20). They reside in Bethany, W. Va.

Connie Doutt (Athlete - 1980s)



Connie Doutt (Buckeye Trail High School, Class of 1981). At a time when girls' sports were starting to take hold in high school athletics, Doutt was one of the first who excelled in three sports — basketball, volleyball and softball — but it was on the basketball court where she had her biggest impact.

The school's all-time leading scorer with 1,842 points who also had 538 career rebounds, the 5-7 guard helped Trail to four straight trips to the OHSAA State Tournament under Coach Dave Linn, including a state championship during her sophomore season in 1979.

In her freshman year, Trail posted a 22-1 record, with Doutt scoring 284 points and gaining Associated Press All-Ohio honorable mention. She scored 311 points as the Lady Warriors went 23-1 in winning the state title in her sophomore season, with Doutt named the state tournament MVP and again gaining honorable mention All-Ohio accolades. The team went 26-1 with Doutt as a junior scoring 432 points. She received first team All-Ohio from United Press International and finished as runner-up as the "Player of the Year" to Trail teammate Lori Heady. She was also a third team All-Ohio pick by AP.

Doutt moved to the head of the class, so to speak, as a senior when she scored 815 points and was first team UPI All-Ohio and "Player of the Year" as well as first team AP All-Ohio and first team All-OVAC. That year, Trail posted a 23-4 record, meaning the Lady Warriors' record during Doutt's four years was an incredible 94-7. She was selected for the first Ohio North-South All-Star Game and scored 18 points to earn game MVP honors.

Doutt was also a four-year starter and letterwinner in both volleyball and softball, playing on the Lady Warriors' state tournament team in 1979. She was inducted into the Buckeye Trail Athletic Hall of Fame in 1996.

The talented cager went on to a fine four-year career at the University of Michigan, becoming the school's first out-of-state scholarship recipient in women's basketball. For her career at Michigan, Doutt scored 415 points, had 267 rebounds and 170 assists.

Jay Peterson (Athlete - 1980s)



Jay Peterson (Cadiz High School, Class of 1980). A spectacular four-sport athlete, Peterson made his biggest impact on the football field.

The Hopedale native dazzled as a running back with numerous memorable performances, including a single-game modern Ohio Valley-record 377 yards against Mingo and games of 288 and 282 yards. He scored six touchdowns in a game twice.

Peterson broke a 50-year old Ohio Valley single-season rushing record held by OVAC "Legends" honoree George (Puck) Burgwin when he rushed for 2,348 yards on 203 carries to lead Cadiz to an 8-0-2 record. He just missed the modern single-season scoring record with 221 points (32 TDs, 28 PAT kicks), one point shy of OVAC Hall of Famer Terry Snively of Powhatan's mark of 222 points.

In his three-year gridiron career with the Cardinals, he rushed for 3,959 yards (second at the time on the Ohio Valley career list) and scored 349 points. Peterson had his football No. 22 retired by the school.

In track, he recorded the Ohio Valley's fastest time in the 100-meters as a senior (11.0 seconds) and also had the fastest 100-yard time (10.3) that year. He won the OVAC Class AA 100-meter race in 11.1 seconds.

He split spring duty between track and baseball and was an All-Valley honorable mention pick, hitting .352 and recording 25 stolen bases on an 18-7 record team. Peterson also participated in basketball as a sophomore and junior.

He earned a scholarship to Miami (Ohio) University and was honored three times on the All-Mid-American Conference football team, including first team accolades in 1982, second team in 1983 and honorable mention in 1981. A four-year letterwinner, he is fifth on the all-time career rushing yardage list at Miami with 2,874 yards.

Following his graduation from Miami in 1985, Peterson went on to a coaching career, first as high school assistant at Cadiz as well as Cincinnati Anderson and Cincinnati Withrow. He then spent eight years at Miami of Ohio (1991-98), five years at Northwestern University (1999-2004) and he is currently beginning his fourth year at Eastern Michigan University where he is the assistant head coach/defensive coordinator/linebackers coach.

Mark Cisar (Athlete - 1990s)



Mark Cisar (Magnolia High School, Class of 1994). He is the only two-time winner of a state football "Player of the Year" award in OVAC history, having won West Virginia's Kennedy Award in 1992 and '93. He was also the Gatorade "Player of the Year" in 1992 and was a two-time Class AA all-state captain. He was a two-time All-OVAC and All-Valley selection.

Cisar played quarterback, safety, placekicker and punter on Blue Eagle teams that compiled a two-year record of 25-3, finishing as the Class AA state runner-up twice under the tutelage of his father, Dave Cisar. In two seasons as a starter and one as a backup, he passed for Ohio Valley record totals of 5,193 yards and 64 touchdowns. As a junior, he passed for a record 2,691 yards and 34 TDs. He also kicked a valley and state record total of 85 points and had a record-tying 99-yard TD pass as a junior.

In baseball, he was a three-time All-West Virginia Class AA, All-OVAC and All-Valley pitcher.

He was also a regular in basketball, scoring 45 points in a game on one occasion.

He earned a baseball scholarship to Charleston Southern University in South Carolina where he was a four-year starter. He was named Big South Conference "Player of the Year" in 1997 and was a three-time all-conference pick.

He was drafted by the Boston Red Sox and was the Red Sox Rookie League "Pitcher of the Year" in 1998. In 1999, he was selected to the South Atlantic League All-Star Team and won a South Atlantic League title in '99 as a member of the Augusta Green Jackets. He then played for the Capitales de Quebec, an independent league team, and was an all-star in 2002 and the Northern League "Relief Pitcher of the Year".

Cisar earned his bachelor's degree in physical education and was a substitute teacher for five years in the Wetzel County School system before going back to Charleston (S.C.) to serve as a health and physical education teacher as well as an assistant football coach.

He is the head football coach at Union Local High School, guiding the Jets to a 9-1 record and their first-ever OHSAA playoff berth in 2007. He was named the Eastern District's Division IV "Co-Coach of the Year".

Suzie Dailer (Athlete - 1990s)



Suzie Dailer (Wheeling Central Catholic High School, Class of 1991). She proved to be a true "queen of the court" in many ways, excelling for four years in basketball and tennis and adding a couple of fine seasons in volleyball for good measure.

In basketball, Dailer gain All-West Virginia recognition all four years, including first team in Class AA as a sophomore and senior and second team laurels as a junior. She was also a three-time All-OVAC and All-Valley first team selection and a two-time All-Mountaineer League pick. The valley's leader in three-point field goals all four years, she scored 22.1 points per game as a senior and finished her career with 1,381 points, the all-time girls' mark for the Lady Maroon Knights. Dailer led Central to three straight OVAC Class AA championships and was a sophomore on the Knights' W. Va. Class AA state runner-up squad in 1989. Central posted a 77-17 record during her career.

In tennis, she also lettered four years and had tremendous success in both OVAC and state tournament play, culminating in a W. Va. state doubles championship (with Pam Butch) as a senior as the Lady Knights finished as the state runner-up. She also finished first or second in several OVAC and regional tournaments in both singles and doubles and helped the team to three OVAC titles and three top four finishes in the state.

In volleyball, she lettered twice and gained first team All-OVAC honors as a senior, helping the team to a 37-5 record and the OVAC, W.Va. Section 1 and Region 1 titles, and a Class AA runner-up finish in the state tournament.

Dailer continued to star at St. Bonaventure University as a four-year starter and letterwinner. She finished as the school's fifth all-time leading scorer (1.422 points) and had the fifth-best single-season in 1992-93 (524 points). She set records for single-game (8), single-season (99) and career (291) three-pointers; had the single-season record for assists (163) and was second in career assists (449). Her all-star honors at St. Bonaventure included second team all-conference as a sophomore and third team as a senior. The 1995 Division I Women's Basketball National Three-Point Shooting champion, she was inducted into the St. Bonaventure Athletic Hall of Fame in 2006.

OHIO VALLEY ATHLETIC CONFERENCE — FOUNDED 1943 — OVAC

OVAC Hall of Fame

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PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Class of 2009

OVAC Hall of Fame

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Richard 'Dick' Edge (OVAC 'Family')



Richard "Dick" Edge (Wheeling High School, Class of 1954). To say Edge has worn many different hats over the years would be a vast understatement.

He has spent 42 years in education, serving as a teacher, coach, assistant principal, principal and superintendent at various OVAC-member schools.

Edge coached in various capacities at Triadelphia, Warwood and Wintersville high schools, starting the wrestling programs at both Triadelphia and Warwood as well as four junior high programs in Ohio County. He coached Warwood to an undefeated season and an OVAC wrestling championship as well as sixth place finish in the W.Va. State Tournament when there was only one classification. He also co-founded and coached summer track and girls' softball programs in Wintersville.

Among his accolades were being named Ohio Eastern District Wrestling Coach of the Year in 1975; receiving the OVAC's prestigious 'Mr. Mat' Award in 1979; induction into the West Liberty State College Hall of Fame in 1997; and selection to the WLSC Wall of Honor for Outstanding Alumni in 2003.

Edge served as president of the OVAC during the 1986-87 and 1987-88 school years and served as a member of the OVAC Executive Board for many years. He was also a past president of the Tri-County Athletic League and the East Central Ohio League.

He also officiated at various levels in football, basketball and track.

Edge represented Wheeling High in the 1954 OVAC All-Star Football Game and then went on to West Liberty State College where he was a four-year letterman, two-time all-West Virginia Conference selection and the team's co-captain as a senior.

He received his B.A. in Business Education, Health Education and Physical Education and a Master's Degree in Secondary Administration from the University of Dayton. He is a U.S. Army veteran, serving active duty from 1958-60 and in the reserves from 1960-63.

Dr. Vincent 'Vince' Monseau (OVAC 'Contributor')



Dr. Vincent "Vince" Monseau (Weir High School, Class of 1958). Think of the sport of wrestling and you think of Monseau, who enjoyed success at the high school level locally before making his mark at West Liberty State College.

As a high school coach, he spent nine years at Oak Glen, Charleston and Weir high schools, guiding the 1967 Oak Glen squad to a W.Va. State Tournament championship.

After one year at Peru State in Nebraska, he spent 31 years (1973-2004) as head coach at West Liberty, compiling a 359-221-7 record. He coached 72 All-Americans, 34 Academic All-Americans and six National Champions and guided the Hilltoppers to a national runner-up finish in 1995.

Monseau, who also coached football and cross country during his days at WLSC, directed the NAIA National Wrestling Tournament in both 1979 and '87 and was an administrative assistant for the NCAA Division II National Wrestling Tournament in 2003.

His awards are numerous, including the OVAC 'Mr. Mat' award in 1983; NAIA Hall of Fame in 1987; USA Wrestling Bronze Level Member Coach in 1987; West Liberty State College Athletic Hall of Fame in 1997; NCAA Division II Southwest Regional Coach of the Year in 1996 and 1997; National Wrestling Hall of Fame in 2002; NCAA Division II Wrestling Hall of Fame in 2003; and National Wrestling Coaches Association Lifetime Member in 2004.

Currently in his fifth year as principal at River High School, Monseau also directed youth wrestling camps at West Liberty for nearly 30 years.

As an athlete, Monseau participated in football, wrestling and track at both Weir High and West Liberty State College and later participated in many distance races, including the Boston Marathon and Wheeling Distance Race.

Monseau attained his B.A. degree from West Liberty State College as well as both a M.A. and Doctorate of Education from West Virginia University.

John Sorrenti (Media)



John Sorrenti (Weir High School, Class of 1956). Even if you don't know Sorrenti, you probably recognize his voice.

Back in 1954, at the age of 16, he began what would be a 40-year career as a sports announcer for WEIR Radio in Weirton. During that time, he broadcast football, basketball and baseball games for four OVAC-member schools – Weir, Madonna, Brooke and Wintersville.

After retiring from that position in 1994, he worked four years for television station WTOV-TV9 on football "Game of the Week" telecasts and also announced the OVAC Wrestling Tournament telecast in 1996.

As a long-time friend and supporter of the OVAC, Sorrenti served as Master of Ceremonies for the OVAC Queen of Queens competition for five years in the mid-1980s and he has been the Master of Ceremonies at the OVAC Hall of Fame Banquet since its inception.

Among Sorrenti's awards, he was honored on the Weir High Wall of Fame in 1995 and received two separate honors from the Dapper Dan Club of the Upper Ohio Valley, including the 2009 Robert S. McKelvey Memorial Award.

Sorrenti began a political career in 1982 when he was elected as a Weirton City Councilman. In 1986, he was elected as a Hancock County Commissioner - a position he was re-elected to twice for a total of 18 years in office.

He has also served as Purchasing Agent for Hancock County Schools and Adult Education and Placement Coordinator of the John D. Rockefeller IV Career Center and is currently Manager of Training at Mountaineer Casino, Resort and Racetrack.

Gene Ford (Coaches)



Gene Ford (Indian Valley North High School, Class of 1970). As colorful and well-known as he was successful, Ford compiled a 440-262 record in 31 years as a high school boys' basketball coach.

He coached one year at Shenandoah and five at Tuscarawas Valley before making his mark during 25 years at Cambridge High (1980-2005) where he won 400 games and lost 183.

Ford's Cambridge teams compiled a 59-25 record in tournament play, winning 18 sectional titles, eight district crowns and five regional championships leading to five state tournament appearances (1987-88, 1991-92,1994-95, 1995-96 and 1999-2000), including a runner-up finish in 1994-95. His teams also won 10 East Central Ohio League titles.

He received "Coach of the Year" honors in the OVAC, Eastern District, District 12 and ECOL and was the OHSBCA Division II State "Coach of the Year" in 1988.

Ford served as president of the District 12 Coaches Association, as a trustee for the OHSAA Foundation and on the Board of Directors of the Ohio High School Basketball Hall of Fame Museum. The recipient of the OVAC Earl Haberfield Coaches Award in 2005, he was inducted into the Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2007.

As an athlete, he earned 11 varsity letters (four in baseball, four in track, three in basketball) at Midvale and Indian Valley North. He scored 1,310 career points and earned first team all-Ohio, all-Eastern District and all-Inter Valley Conference accolades in basketball and was a state qualifier in the pole vault in track.

He was a four-year letterman at Muskingum College in basketball, scoring 1,717 points (second most in school history) while earning all-Ohio Athletic Conference "Athlete of the Year" honors and UPI "Small America" accolades. He was a charter member of the Muskingum Athletic Hall of Fame in 1980.

Henry 'Hank' Lazasz (Coaches)



Henry "Hank" Lazasz (Warren Consolidated High School, Class of 1950). A pillar of the boys' basketball coaching community for 34 years, Lazasz topped the 400-victory plateau as his teams at Warren Consolidated, Buckeye South, Buckeye SouthWest and Buckeye Local combined for a 405-301 record.

All told, Lazasz-coached teams won four OVAC championships, 10 sectional titles and three district crowns while having two teams go undefeated in the regular season (1970 and 1977).

In 15 years at Warren Consolidated (1958-72), his teams were 179-120, winning two OVAC championships (1961 and 1970). The 1970 squad posted a 22-1 record, winning OHSAA Class A sectional and district titles before bowing in the regional.

In 16 years at Buckeye South, his teams were 211-133 and won two OVAC championships (1977 and 1981), eight sectional titles and two district crowns. The 1977 team was 22-1 and ranked No. 1 in Ohio Class AA, losing in the regional finals. That year, Lazasz was named Ohio Class AA "Coach of the Year" by UPI and Eastern District "Coach of the Year" by AP.

He concluded with two years at Buckeye SouthWest and then was head coach in the first year of the complete Buckeye Local consolidation in 1990-91.

Lazasz also was the OVAC all-sports "Coach of the Year" in 1970 and received the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club's Carl Hamill Award in 1990. He coached in both the Ohio North-South All-Star Game and the OVAC All-Star Classic and had two yearly OVAC basketball scholarships named in his honor. He receive the OVAC's Earl Haberfield Coaches Award in 1986.

He was a member of the OHSBCA and served as president of the District 5 Basketball Coaches Association. He was also inducted into the Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame and the District 5 Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

Lazasz was a three-year letterman in high school basketball at Warren Consolidated in both basketball and football. He then lettered two years in basketball and four in football at Bethany College before serving two years in the U.S. Army.

Bill Paolisso (Officials)



Bill Paolisso (Weir High School, Class of 1946). He was a mainstay among area officials, working OVAC football and boys/girls basketball games for a 50-year period from 1948-1998, first with the Wheeling board and later with the Weirton-Steubenville board.

Paolisso officiated 10 West Virginia state championship football games during his career and several Ohio-West Virginia and OVAC All-Star football games.

In basketball, he officiated more than 100 postseason tournaments (sectionals, regionals, state), including 19 state tournaments. He worked the first Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic in 1978 and also was a referee in the West Virginia Conference.

Among Paolisso's officiating awards are the OVAC Robert Dawson Officials Award; the Ohio Valley Football Coaches Association Officials Award; the West Virginia Secondary Schools Athletic Commission Award; and the Weirton-Steubenville Officials' Board Award.

Paolisso was a three-sport athlete at Weir High (football, basketball and baseball). He was first team all-state in football and basketball as a senior, earning all-OVAC honors in basketball twice and once in football. He was also all-tournament for the state champion Red Riders' baseball team.

He played two years of professional baseball in the St. Louis Cardinals' organization (1952 and 1953) and he served two years in the U.S. Army.

Harold 'Doc' Daugherty (Athlete - 1940s)



Harold "Doc" Daugherty (Weir High School, Class of 1945). In 1945, he became the first of only seven high school athletes to win the W.Va. Amateur Athlete of the Year Award, the state's oldest honor dating back to 1934. A first team, all-class, all-stater in football, basketball and baseball, he also earned All-OVAC football and basketball honors as a Red Rider senior.

The two-way back led Weir to a 9-1 football record in 1943, losing only to state champion Parkersburg. As a senior, in 1944, he led Weir to a 40-13 victory over Parkersburg and accounted for five touchdowns — a TD run, two TD passes, a 101-yard pass interception return and an 80-yard kickoff return.

Daugherty's two-year career included running and passing for 1,925 yards and 31 touchdowns. He also returned kicks and was a star defensive back.

In basketball, the all-stater helped Weir to a 22-2 record. In baseball, he led the Red Riders to the one-class state championship in 1945.

He signed a football scholarship to Ohio State University where he played on a 7-2 record team as a freshman starting safety. In the fifth game, he moved into the starting offensive lineup as tailback. He was drafted into the U.S. Army in April of 1946 and, after discharge, he signed a professional baseball contract with the Detroit Tigers and played pro baseball from 1948-53. Included were three years in Class AAA with Buffalo and Toledo. He opened the 1951 season with the major league team, but returned to Toledo after a month.

When the Weir High football coaching job opened, he was hired and guided his second team, in 1955, to an 8-2 record and an OVAC title. He also continued his pro baseball career by playing in the late 1950s in Minot, N.D., and Mitchell, S.D., and was manager of farm teams in 1964 and 1965 in Coco Beach, Fla., and Duluth, Minn. He capped his high school coaching career in Bedford, Ohio.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Jim Hanna (Athlete - 1950s)



Jim Hanna (Weir High School, Class of 1950). A three-sport all-star who led the Red Riders to two state one-class championships as a senior, he is one of the most decorated athletes in school history. A varsity football starter as a freshman, he continued to excel under Hall of Fame coach Carl Hamill, who labeled Hanna and Daugherty as "two of the finest all-around athletes" he coached in his legendary career.

In 1949, Hanna starred on the 11-0 record Weir football team which won the first W.Va. largest Class A playoff title with a 27-13 victory over Milton. The two-way end/punter/placekicker landed nine touchdown passes and scored 83 points as a senior when he was runner-up for the West Virginia Player of the Year Heisman Award (now the Kennedy Award) and was selected first team All-OVAC, All-Valley and All-State. He also played in two all-star games: West Virginia vs. Ohio and the West Virginia North-South game.

In basketball, he was second team All-W.Va. and All-OVAC.

In baseball, he pitched and batted Weir to the one-class West Virginia championship. In the 5-3 finals' win over East Bank, he struck out 10 in a six-hit effort and batted in four runs with two singles.

He accepted a football scholarship from legendary Kentucky coach Paul (Bear) Bryant and started at end on a freshman squad quarterbacked by Babe Parilli. He left school to play minor league baseball for several seasons before returning to Weirton, where he has been a long-time local American Legion, high school and summer baseball coach and scout.

Bill Jobko (Athlete - 1950s)



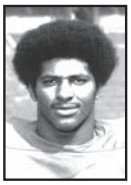
Bill Jobko (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1953). A three-year, three-sport Bulldog athlete in football, basketball and baseball, he earned All-OVAC and All-Valley football honors as a senior lineman.

Recruited by Ohio State University, he became a two-way offensive guard and linebacker who played on the Buckeye national title teams of 1954 and 1957 when the Buckeyes won two Rose Bowls. He was team MVP in 1957. He is the only player in Big 10 Conference history to never play in a losing Big 10 regular season game. He recorded a safety for the College All-Stars in a 35-19 victory over the NFL champion Detroit Lions, one of only eight times the collegians defeated the NFL champions in the annual classic.

He was drafted by the Los Angeles Rams and played for the NFL team from 1958-62 before performing for the Minnesota Vikings from 1963-65. Jobko capped his pro playing career as a team defensive captain of the original Atlanta Falcons in 1966. From 1967-89, he worked for the Falcons in various roles -assistant coach, scout and Director of Pro Player Personnel. He closed his NFL career as chief college scout of the Phoenix Cardinals from 1989-94.

Bridgeport High School honored Jobko by naming the street entrance to Perkins Field as "Bill Jobko Way" and then on Aug. 21, 2008, dedicated its home complex as "Bill Jobko Football Stadium."

Tim Anderson (Athlete - 1960s)



Tim Anderson (Follansbee High School, Class of 1967). Anderson's football career was a well-traveled one, as well as a quite successful one. He first realized grid greatness in Follansbee, a prep career so good that it landed him a scholarship at one of the premier football colleges in the nation — The Ohio State University.

Just like for the Blue Wave back on the banks of the Ohio River, Anderson starred for the Buckeyes, so much so that he was a first-round pick of the San Francisco 49ers. His NFL, days, however, got off to a delayed start due to contract difficulties. In the meantime, Anderson enjoyed an all-league honors stint with the Canadian Football League's Toronto Argonauts.

Anderson was a three-sport standout at Follansbee High. In addition to his many football achievements, the 6 ft., 195-pounder distinguished himself quite nicely in baseball and track.

As a senior, Anderson's Blue Wave went 8-2. Those two blemishes came in the season's first two games, contests in which Anderson did not play due to injury. In just eight games, Anderson rushed for 863 yards and also led the team in tackles As a result, the two-way back earned all-OVAC, All-Valley and all-W.Va. Class AAA first-team honors. As junior, he was all-OVAC and All-Valley second team.

He started two years for the Blue Wave baseball squad as an outfielder. He also joined the track team as a senior and was fifth in the state Class AAA shot put.

At Ohio State, Anderson started three years as a defensive back. During that span, the powerful Buckeyes went 27-2 with two Big Ten titles while also being named the consensus national champions in 1968. That team beat the O.J. Simpson-led USC Trojans in the Rose Bowl. As a senior, he was first-team all-Big Ten and was a first team All-American.

His Buckeye stardom proved a springboard to being the 23rd pick in the 1971 NFL draft. He owned the distinction of being the highest of the 12 Ohio State gridders chosen in that draft, including Jack Tatum. When unable to agree to terms with the 49ers, he played four seasons in Canada before returning to San Francisco and playing the 1975 campaign for the Niners. The following season, Anderson played for the Buffalo Bills.

Mark Thompson (Athlete - 1960s)



Mark Thompson (Mount Pleasant High School, Class of 1969). Basketball was a way of life in the Thompson family, with Mark being the most productive. His two older brothers — Rich and Jim — started a hoop tradition at Mount Pleasant High in 1960. Every year during that decade witnessed a Thompson in the Mounties' starting lineup, ending with Mark's graduation in 1969. Mark set the family standard, however, for basketball greatness. He wasted no time making his presence felt on the hardwood, finishing as the second-leading scorer for the junior varsity team as a frosh. That jayvee squad went 18-0.

Thompson was nothing short of magical the next three winters, leading the team in scoring and rebounding each campaign. His tremendous play also sparked an eye-popping 92-9 record during that span for the Mounties, which included three successive sectional co-championships, a district final berth and a district semi-final appearance. As a sophomore, the hard-working hoopster averaged 17.6 points a game. That figure jumped to 24.8 as a junior and was capped by a 28.1 per game showing as a senior, including a career-best 50 lightings against Smithfield. During that senior year, the Mounties averaged more than 95 points a game, topping the century mark in six of 18 regular season contests.

All told, the 6 ft. 4 Thompson — who was blessed with both inside and outside scoring skills — exited high school with 1,623 points in his portfolio. He netted a host of accolades for his basketball expertise, headed by first team all-Ohio honors as both a junior and senior. He was also an all-Eastern District, all-Eastern Ohio Athletic League and all-OVAC honoree all three years. He was captain of the OVAC team as a senior.

Thompson was no one-sport wonder as he also displayed his athletic prowess on both the gridiron and baseball diamond. He was a two-way starter in football, starring as quarterback and defensive back. The three-year regular was an all-Eastern District, all-OVAC and Eastern Ohio Athletic League selection in his junior and senior seasons. Thompson also picked up three letters in baseball., chalked up two no-hitters and four one-hitters.

Not surprising, Thompson received some 120 Division I college scholarship offers. He cast his lot with basketball at the University of Florida. Thompson was the second-leading scorer on the Gators' frosh team. After redshirting as a sophomore due to an ankle injury, he worked himself into being a part-time starter during his junior and senior seasons and was a co-captain his final campaign with the Gators.

Marty Coyne (Athlete - 1970s)



Marty Coyne (Linsly Military Institute, Class of 1977). Coyne was a three-sport standout for the Cadets, but basketball was definitely the versatile 6 ft. 5 athlete's meal ticket.

Coyne distinguished himself as one of the premier hoopsters in the Ohio Valley during the decade of the '70s. He was a three-year starter in roundball at Linsly, blossoming into a virtual scoring machine his junior and senior campaigns. Coyne netted 599 points in his junior season alone, good for a 27.2 average. He was also a beast on the boards, grabbing 14.2 caroms per outing. He nearly duplicated those numbers in his senior campaign, scoring 598 points for a 27.1 average. The talented post's rebound totals ballooned to 16.5 per game.

Coyne's scoring antics were tops in the Ohio Valley both seasons. His single-game high was 46 against Wheeling Central. The dependable cager scored in double figures in all 47 of his high school starts. Coyne's scoring prowess also translated into team success. The Cadets compiled 54-12 record during his final three campaigns. The Bridgeport native garnered all-City, all-OVAC and all-West Virginia honors each for his last two years. He also was co-captain of the all-state team as a senior. He ended his illustrious hardwood career with 1,389 points.

He was also a standout on the gridiron, starting three seasons. The glue-fingered receiver led all Ohio Valley small school pass catchers his senior season while also averaging 37.5 yards per punt. Coyne was also named all-OVAC and all-state first team for his football success as a senior.

Springtime saw Coyne start three seasons on the Linsly diamond, serving as co-captain as a senior.

After graduation from Linsly, Coyne received an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point (NY). He had the privilege of playing for the now legendary Duke head coach Mike Krzyzewski. Coyne started three seasons, helping the Black Knights of the Hudson to an NIT berth in 1978. He averaged 15.6 points a game as a junior and 16.5 points as a senior. His 1,126 career points ranked 11th on the all-time Army scoring list at the time of his graduation. He also grabbed more than 400 rebounds for the Cadets, where he served as co-captain as a senior. Coyne ascended to the rank of LTC with 11 years active duty.

Mike Dawson (Athlete - 1970s)



Mike Dawson (Magnolia High School, Class of 1978). When you begin to recall the great athletes in Magnolia High annals, Mike Dawson is always near the top of the list. And why not? The rugged 6 ft. 2, 195-pounder earned 12 letters in four sports for the Blue Eagles.

It was football, however, which brought Dawson the most acclaim. Following his senior grid season in 1977, Dawson was selected as the W.Va. All-Class Player of the Year by the Morgantown Touchdown Club while finishing as runnerup for the Kennedy Award. That same season, he was named captain of the all-W.Va. Class AA team as a defensive back after pilfering seven passes. He was also the captain of the all-Valley and all-OVAC teams. Dawson rushed for 833 yards on just 112 carries in nine games as a senior for Coach Dave Cisar. He was named second-team all-state as a quarterback as a junior. For his career, Dawson accounted for more than 3,000 all-purpose yards and totaled 152 points despite missing four games with injuries.

Dawson ultimately selected West Virginia University. As a sophomore, he earned a starting spot as a linebacker, but he injured his knee while blocking a punt against Penn State. Dawson ended as a two-year Mountaineer grid letterman.

The talented Blue Eagle was also dominant in baseball. He was a four-year starter, seeing action at both catcher and shortstop and earning all-West Virginia laurels his junior and senior seasons after helping lead the Eagles to the state tournament both years. He was a two-time all-OVAC and all-Valley honoree, serving as captain of the latter as a senior. Spring proved quite busy for Dawson. When not playing baseball, he was a valuable contributor to the Blue Eagles' track team. Despite little practice time, he was still able to sparkle in the West Virginia Class A state track meet. As a junior, he was runner-up in both the 100-yard dash and long jump, the latter on the strength of a leap better than 21 feet. He also won the West Virginia AAU 100-yard dash in 1977.

Dawson'was also a three-year starter in basketball. Among his many hoop highlights was a 36-point outburst against Wheeling Park.

Charlie Keenan (Athlete - 1980s)



Charlie Keenan (Steubenville High School, Class of 1985). Be it on the gridiron, wrestling mat or in the classroom, Keenan prided himself on excellence and in all three areas of his life, he was nothing short of sensational.

Keenan was the cornerstone of Big Red's initial state grid playoff championship, captaining the 1984 grid juggernaut. He led the Reno Saccoccia-coached gridders to a 13-0 season that fall. He established new school records for tackles and sacks en route to being named the state's Division II Lineman of the Year. The first-team all-stater was also accorded honorable mention All-American plaudits. He was named captain of the all-OVAC and all-Eastern District teams and was selected to play in the OVAC and Ohio North-South All-Star games.

The relentless lineman was a three-year starter for Steubenville that went 30-0 in the regular season and 33-2 overall. His great grid play earned him the distinction of being named the co-captain of the 1980s All-Decade Football Team selected by The Intelligencer. His Big Red success proved a springboard to a football scholarship to The Ohio State University where he was a letterman for the Scarlet & Gray gridders.

Keenan was just as impressive on the prep mats. He won a pair of OVAC titles, capturing the 175-pound class as a sophomore followed by the 185-pound crown as a junior before grabbing the brass ring as the Ohio state kingpin that winter. Keenan opted to move up to heavyweight as a senior, preparing him for the rigors of an Ohio State gridder. That move to heavyweight set up a match against Barnesville High's mammoth and fellow OSU grid recruit Tim Moxley. The two met in the OVAC finals in 1985, attracting possibly the largest crowd at a wrestling match in Ohio Valley annals, with Moxley pulling out an epic 11-8 triumph. It snapped Keenan's 45-match winning streak. Keenan was awarded the George Kovalick Scholarship that year. He finished his Big Red wrestling career with a sparkling 110-18 record.

Keenan also opted to wrestle at Ohio State, earning two varsity letters in the mat sport.

He was the Steubenville High valedictorian, compiling a 4.0 GPA. He went on to earn master's and doctorate degrees. After receiving his OSU degree, Keenan returned home and served as a teacher, administrator and coach at his alma mater. He now is a school superintendent in northern Ohio.

Tim Moxley (Athlete - 1980s)



Tim Moxley (Barnesville High School, Class of 1985.) A heavyweight in every sense of the word. Tim Moxley is certainly that. Moxley came up huge in both football and wrestling for the Shamrocks. He enjoyed a star-studded and champion-filled four athletic years at the western Belmont County school.

Moxley garnered all-Ohio honors in football for the Red & Green while also grabbing a pair of state wrestling championships. The 6 ft. 7, 300-pounder parlayed his prep achievements into a football scholarship at The Ohio State University.

Moxley was a three-year starter on the Shamrocks' line. He helped guide the Red & Green to a 17-3 mark over his last two seasons and the OVAC championship in 1983.

He was accorded a bevy of first team all-star honors for his senior season play. They included all-Valley, all-OVAC, all-Eastern District and all-Ohio by The Associated Press. He was a second-team all-Ohio United Press International honoree As a junior, Moxley was a second-team all-Valley selection.

Moxley carved out an even more glittering prep resume in the mat sport. The powerful heavyweight captured a pair of Ohio state championships, matching the number of OVAC crowns to his credit. As a senior, he led the Shamrock grapplers to the overall OVAC Tournament title while also being accorded the prestigious Bierkortte Award. Moreover, the Moxley-led matmen of Coach Darrell Davis captured the state tournament team title in 1985. His OVAC title matches against Steubenville's Charlie Keenan — also joining this year's OVAC Hall of Fame induction field — are legendary. Moxley handed Keenan his only two losses in the OVAC event. Moxley was so impressive on the mat that he was selected to the USA's Scholastic All-America Wrestling "Dream Team" for 1984-85. He was third in the OVAC as a sophomore.

At Ohio State, Moxley was all football. He moved into the Buckeyes' starting lineup as a sophomore, after seeing playing time in all 13 games as a red-shirt freshman. He started seven out of the Bucks' final eight games as a sophomore. As a junior, he started all 11 games and continued that strong play as a senior. He played in two bowl games for Ohio State — the 1987 Cotton Bowl and the 1990 Hall of Fame Bowl. Moxley was selected by the Washington Redskins in the ninth round of the 1990 NFL Draft.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

David Bosley (Athlete - 1990s)



David Bosley (Paden City High School, Class of 1993). Paden City prides itself on quality basketball. To that end, David Bosley is on the short list of great Wildcats.

Bosley was a scoring terror at the tiny Wetzel County School. The scoring also translated into a wealth of Wildcat winning as the Green & White advanced to the West Virginia state tournament in 1991 and 1992. Coach Bob Burton's 'Cats also grabbed the OVAC crowns in the 1992 and 1993 seasons. All told, Paden City won 81 times and lost just 12 during Bosley's four-year hoop career. While the Wildcats were winning, Bosley was scoring. He finished his prep days with 1,996 points, including a senior campaign in which he netted 29.2 points, 7.8 assists and seven rebounds per start. Those lofty numbers earned him the captaincy of the all-state team. He was also captain of the all-OVAC squad that year and was honored by the Dapper Dans for outstanding achievement. During his sophomore and junior seasons, the 5 ft. 11 backcourt dandy earned all-OVAC and all-state honors as Paden City advanced to the state tournament each winter.

Bosley also made use of his superb athleticism to star on the football field for Mike Flannery. The four-year grid letterman sparkled as a quarterback, earning all-OVAC first-team honors as a junior and senior. He completed 113-of-221 passes for 1,271 yards and 11 touchdowns while rushing for 489 stripes and seven additional scores as a senior. Bosley was named to the West Virginia Sports Ultimate All-State Football Team. As a junior, he completed 69-of-112 tosses for 995 yards and eight touchdowns. He also rushed for 559 yards and six TDs. Bosley was also a stellar punter, averaging 36.1 yards on 29 boots.

Bosley also made his presence felt in track and field. He was an OVAC long jump champion and also was a state runner-up in the 300-meter hurdles.

Bosley took his vast basketball skills to the next level, earning a scholarship to LSU in the rugged SEC. He played four years for legendary Dale Brown, who retired after Bosley's senior campaign. In Bosley's final regular season game, he netted the final four points of the game to give Brown his first-ever triumph over Nolan Richardson's Arkansas Razorbacks since they joined the SEC in 1991. Bosley was awarded the LSU's Director Cup for academic excellence and was recognized as an SEC Scholar Athlete.

Otis Winston (Athlete - 1990s)



Otis Winston (Toronto High School, Class of 1992). Winston is synonymous with Ohio Valley high jumping. He still remains the measuring stick for prep jumping greatness.

Winston, however, was more than an accomplished high jumper. He possessed multi-faceted skills both in track as well as basketball.

While becoming the Ohio Valley's first seven-foot leaper, he was equally as dominating on the hardwood, lettering four years for the Red Knights, while garnering first-team all-Ohio honors as a senior.

Winston is still the Red Knights' all-time leading scorer via his 1,453 markers. As a senior, the athletic forward carried his team to an OVAC 3-A crown thanks, in part, to his 31.1 points, 14 rebounds, six steals and six assists per game.

He was the model of consistency as reflected in a 20-game streak of 30 points or more. His single game high was 46. He was both the Eastern District and District 5 Player of The Year and starred in the Ohio North-South Game, scoring 18 points in a winning cause. As a junior, he averaged 25 points a game and was first-team all-OVAC. He also enjoyed a superb sophomore year, gaining first-team all-OVAC honors with his 18 points a game.

For the Red Knight thinclads, the 6 ft. 5 Winston was a three-time state champion, twice in the high jump and in the long jump as a senior with a 22-10 effort. He captured the state high jump title as a sophomore with a 6-10 jump followed by his record-setting state leap of 6-11 the following June.

His athletic achievements led him to Columbus where he starred in both sports for The Ohio State University.

Winston earned All-American honors at OSU in track, winning the Big Ten high jumping title four times, twice outdoors and twice indoors. He finished third in the NCAA as a freshman with his still Ohio State record of 7-4.5. Winston competed in the 1996 Olympic trials.

He was no slouch for the Buckeyes in basketball, earning a starting berth as a junior, specializing as a defensive stopper. He served the Buckeye hoopsters as co-captain as a senior and finished his career with a 17-point outing against hated-rival Michigan. He was a three-year OSU basketball letterman.

Winston went on to play professional basketball in Russia. An ordained minister, he still lives in the Columbus area. He owns his own production company and is a bank computer technician. He also finds time to coach track at New Albany High School.

Class of 2010

OVAC Hall of Fame

Sponsored by Robinson Auto Group

Rick DeLuca (OVAC 'Family')



Rick DeLuca (Warren Consolidated High School, Class of 1970). Probably the only question regarding DeLuca is in what aspect of the OVAC hasn't he made a significant contribution. Whether it's the arduous task of compiling the conference standings, serving on various committees, developing new ventures, coaching and even reporting the events through the media, DeLuca has done it all.

He's the one who puts together the weekly standings in a majority of sports in the OVAC, including football, volleyball, boys' and girls' basketball and baseball.

It was DeLuca who formulated the OVAC basketball playoffs, serving as the director of that event, and who also combined with OVAC Executive Secretary Tom Rataiczak to establish the OVAC Museum – a historical look at the conference, its schools and athletes throughout the years - which is housed in WesBanco Arena in Wheeling.

DeLuca also serves on the OVAC Volleyball Committee, the OVAC Baseball Committee, the OVAC Boosters Committee and the OVAC Scholarship Committee.

He also offers – through his DeLuca Realty business venture – a yearly OVAC Volleyball Scholarship.

DeLuca, who also coached the high school baseball teams at Bridgeport for three years and Buckeye Local for one year, is a veteran of the Ohio Valley media, working for more than 40 years as a part-time sportswriter at The Times Leader. He was a three-time finalist for Ohio Sportswriter of the Year by the National Sportswriter and Sportscasters Association and received four awards from the Ohio Prep Sportswriters Association. He also wrote some articles for USA Today in its early years and has had several non-sports articles published in various regional and national publications.

Frank Baxter (OVAC 'Contributor')



Frank Baxter (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1949). When you think of Bridgeport High School, this is surely one of the names that comes to mind. After all, Baxter was part of the Bridgeport school system for more than 60 years as a student, athlete, teacher, coach and administrator.

As an athlete, he was an all-OVAC honoree in football as a center-linebacker and in basketball where he averaged 25 points per game as a senior. After a stint in the armed services during the Korean War, he enrolled at West Liberty State College where he played football and ran track and received a bachelor's degree, later receiving his master's from the University of Dayton.

After teaching and coaching at Barnesville High School for one season, he returned to his alma mater and began an incredible 47-year run as Bridgeport's athletic director – believed to be the longest tenure in OVAC history – retiring in 2004.

From 1962 to 1980, he also doubled as the Bulldogs' head boys' basketball coach, guiding the team to a solid 269-128 record. His teams won four OVAC championships (1963, '66, '72 and '74); 14 sectional titles; two district crowns and one regional championship. Bridgeport posted an unbeaten regular season in 1966, ending with a final 23-1 record and the UPI Class A state poll championship; and finished as the 1969 Ohio Class A runner-up with a 25-2 record at a time when there were only two classes in the state.

Baxter was named the Ohio Class A "Coach of the Year" in 1966 and became the first recipient of the OVAC's all-sports "Coach of the Year" award in 1969. He was also selected Eastern Ohio and Eastern District "Coach of the Year" on several occasions. In 1988, Baxter was the Eastern District "Athletic Director of the Year" and he was inducted into the Ohio Athletic Administrators Hall of Fame in 1994. He has also been recognized by the Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association, the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame through the OHSAA in 1988 and with the Earl Haberfield Coaches Award at the OVAC Basketball Classic in 1987. Baxter received the Carl Hamill Award from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club in 2003 and when the new Bridgeport High School was constructed, the floor at the John J. Havlicek Gymnasium was named Frank Baxter Court.

William 'Bill' Davies (Media)



William J. "Bill" Davies (Barnesville High School, Class of 1944). A "gentle giant" who wore many hats during his lifetime, it would be easy to label Davies as "Mr. Barnesville" to many inside and outside the western Belmont County community, but it was in the media where he made perhaps his greatest impact.

After enlisting in the Navy during World War II and serving with the Navy Seabees in Okinawa, he attended Miami (Ohio) University and completed his education at The Ohio State University where he graduated from the OSU School of Journalism in 1950.

A true "old school" reporter who could recall many names and events at the drop of a hat, his lifelong career was spent right in his backyard at The Barnesville Enterprise until his retirement in 1994, serving several years as editor-publisher while also covering Shamrock sporting events religiously.

Not only did he report on Barnesville athletics for The Enterprise, but he also was a valuable contributor to the sports departments at The Times Leader in Martins Ferry and The Daily Jeffersonian in Cambridge.

Among the sports-related awards Davies received were a Distinguished Service Award from the Barnesville wrestling program in 199l; the District 12 Basketball Coaches Association Distinguished Service Award in 1996; the Ohio Baseball Hall of Fame Media Award in 1997; and induction into the Ohio Prep Sportswriters Association Hall of Fame in 1998.

He also was inducted into the Barnesville Area Education Foundation Hall of Fame in 1998; was named Barnesville Citizen of the Year in 1994; received a Founders Award from the Ohio Association of Community Colleges; and graces the top of the Heritage Tree at Belmont Technical College.

Davies was a varsity letterman in football and basketball in high school, and was a member of the gold medal-winning basketball team in the 1945 Pacific Olympics. He was a registered basketball official for 20 years and served as Ohio Stadium bench security and as an usher at Buckeye football games from 1958 until the year of his death in 2003.

John Stephenson (Coaches)



John Stephenson (Waynesburg High School, Class of 1969). Regarded as the "Father of Cadiz Wrestling", Stephenson assumed the role of head mat coach in the second year of the sport at the school.

His first team had just 12 wrestlers on the squad and finished 5-5-2, but by the next year the team had increased to 34 members and the program was off and running.

What followed during the next 14 years until Stephenson stepped down after the 1988 season was that Cadiz wrestling became highly-respected throughout the state of Ohio and was a perennial Ohio Valley Athletic Conference powerhouse.

Stephenson-coached Cardinal squads won 12 OVAC Class AA dual meet titles, 12 OVAC Class AA tournament titles and the overall OVAC mat championship in 1981. His teams also won eight sectional championships and seven district titles with numerous top 10 state tournament finishes, highlighted by the 1987 team which captured the Ohio Class A State Wrestling Championship. That feat earned Stephenson the Ohio Class A "Coach of the Year" selection.

Under his tutelage, Cadiz produced 29 state place finishers including two state champions and countless OVAC Tournament champions. Stephenson's dual meet record with the Cardinals was an impressive 142-18-2.

For his many contributions to the sport of wrestling, including serving for many years on the OVAC Wrestling Committee and as director of several sectional and district tournaments, Stephenson was honored with the OVAC's prestigious "Mr. Mat Award" in 1993. Harrison Central later recognized the long-time coach with the naming of school's multipurpose building as The John W. Stephenson Center.

Stephenson received his degree in Industrial Arts and Physical Education from Fairmont State College, where he was an NAIA All-American wrestler. After stepping down as wrestling coach, Stephenson served as assistant principal at Cadiz High School and then was promoted to principal at Harrison Central when the district reorganized in 1999 and he maintained that position until 2001. He has also served as principal at Harrison Hopedale Elementary, Harrison Lakeland Elementary and has been Buildings and Grounds Supervisor for the district.

Charles 'Chuck' Watt (Coaches)



Charles "Chuck" Watt (Steubenville High School, Class of 1945). A mainstay of Big Red athletics, Coach Watt made his mark both as head basketball and baseball coach.

In basketball, Watt assisted Ang Vaccaro before taking over in 1967 and beginning a 23-year stint as head coach. During that time, he compiled a stellar record of 350-149, a winning percentage of 70.1.

Big Red won eight OVAC championships under Watt (1971, '75, '78, '79, '80, '81, '86 and '90) and he was named the District 5 Basketball Coaches Association "Coach of the Year" in each of those seasons while being named OVAC "Coach of the Year" in both 1971 and 1990. His teams won 12 sectional titles, including seven straight from 1983 through 1990; and captured four district championships (1970, '71, '85 and '90).

He was inducted into the Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1994 and into the District 5 Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

Watt also succeeded Vaccaro as the school's head baseball coach, serving in that role from 1965-75 and compiling a 192-87-4 mark. His Big Red teams won two OVAC championships (1968 and 1973); three sectional titles (1968, '72 and '75) and one district crown (1972).

He also coached the Steubenville American Legion Post 33 team for many years. After serving as an assistant to Vaccaro from 1957-82 before becoming the manager in 1983 and posting a 367-104 record, including state championships in 1984 and 1989.

Watt's coaching career actually began in his senior season at Steubenville College when he took over at mid-season and guided a team that started out 3-5 to a 14-8 record to earn recognition as the "Most Improved Team in the Country" as determined by the Dick Dunkel National Rating System.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

John 'Streaky' Haloszka (Officials)



John "Streaky" Haloszka (McKinley Vocational School, Class of 1943). A dedicated and colorful individual who was easily recognizable by his nickname, Haloszka spent 40 years as an official in the Ohio Valley, working high school games in football, basketball, softball, baseball and track.

He also officiated in the Wheeling Outdoor Basketball League which featured such players as Ohio State University greats John Havlicek and Jerry Lucas and West Virginia University legends Jerry West and Rod Hundley. He also worked many years in the St. Vincent's Tournament and the Sistersville Independent Tournament – both widely-recognized for attracting top collegiate players from throughout the tri-state area.

He worked a host of West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission (SSAC) tournament games at the sectional, regional and state levels and also officiated in the West Virginia Catholic State Tournament.

Among the honors Haloszka received were an SSAC Service Award at the state basketball tournament in 1975; an SSAC Meritorious Award for 30 years of officiating football and basketball in 1984; a Meritorious Award for outstanding service to high school athletics from the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) in 1985; recognition from the Ohio Valley Board of Football Officials for his many years of service in 1986; honorary lifetime memberships to the Ohio Valley Board of Football Officials in 1988 and the Ohio Valley Board of Basketball Officials in 1990.

He was also honored by the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club for outstanding achievements and contributions to high school sports in the area in 1989 and recognized as an honorary official at the 31st annual Rudy Mumley OVAC Charity All-Star Football Classic in 2002.

Fred Bruney (Athlete 1940s)



Fred Bruney (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1949). An honored football player at three levels — high school, college and pro, he etched his name in Purple Rider lore as a senior when he led the 1948 team to a 9-0-1 record. Ferry was ranked No. 3 in the Ohio one-class poll behind No. 1 Massillon (8-1) and No. 2 Canton McKinley (9-1). The lone tie was a scoreless struggle with unbeaten Triadelphia (9-0-1) played before 10,961 at Ferry Stadium.

After the mid-season tie with the Triads, Bruney led Ferry to wins over Bellaire, 33-0; East Liverpool, 13-7; Steubenville, 20-0; Linsly, 35-0; and Mansfield, 6-0. Bruney lifted the Riders past East Liverpool with a second half comeback; led Ferry past Steubenville, following a scoreless first half, with a TD run and TD pass; and scored the game's only TD in a 6-0 win over state-ranked Mansfield. Ferry had seven shutouts and allowed only 19 points.

The four-year football player, who also played basketball and ran track, earned All-Ohio honors from International News Service as well as All-OVAC and All-Eastern Ohio recognition. The triple-threat player led the Riders in rushing and scoring with 97 points plus six TD passes and also led the team in pass interceptions and kick returns.

He went on to Ohio State University where the two-way back had 17 pass interceptions — second on the Buckeye charts, including three in one game. He was a first team All-Big Ten Conference choice and played in the East-West Shrine Game.

Bruney was the 35th overall draft pick, in the third round, by the Cleveland Browns in 1953 and played six years in the NFL with the San Francisco 49ers, Pittsburgh Steelers and Los Angeles Rams. From 1960-62, he played in the upstart AFL with the Boston Patriots and twice earned AFL All-Star status. He ended with 15 pro pass interceptions.

He then served 35 years as an NFL assistant coach with the Philadelphia Eagles, Atlanta Falcons, Tampa Bay Buccaneers, New York Giants and Indianapolis Colts. When he retired in 1997, he had the longest tenure as a player and coach in pro football.

Bruney was the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Co-Man of the Year in 1981 along with OVAC Hall of Famer Tom Keane and was inducted into the City of Martins Ferry Hall of Fame in 2009.

Henry Josefczyk (Athlete 1950s)



Henry "Hank" Josefczyk (Yorkville High School, Class of 1956). After five decades, he holds the Ohio Valley record for basketball scoring average for a senior. The 6-foot-6 center scored 1,097 points in 26 games for a 42.2 per game norm. He averaged 17.5 per game with 728 points as a junior and his four-year total of 2,001 points ranks in the Top 15 in Ohio Valley history.

An 11-letter winner — four each in basketball and baseball and three in football — he led the Ductillites to a 22-4 team record as a senior. They won the Jefferson County title for the second straight year plus the Ohio Class B section and district crowns including a win over an unbeaten Strasburg team before losing to Chagrin Falls, 62-60, in the regional tournament. As a senior, he broke the Yorkville single game scoring record set by OVAC charter Hall of Famer Ken Alessi by netting 76 points against Shadyside, a team he also scored 60 on in another game. He had 62 against Linsly and four 50-point games to average 45.1 points for regular season. The 76-point game is the third-highest in OV history and came in the final regular season game, a 99-78 win.

Josefczyk was selected first team All-Ohio, All-OVAC and All-Eastern Ohio as well as Chuck Taylor All-America recognition by playing in the annual North-South All-America Game in Murray, Ky. He also played in the Ohio/W. Va. vs. Kentucky All-Star games in Huntington, W.Va. and Ashland, Ky.

He reportedly had some 200 college scholarship offers and the senior class president and salutatorian selected the University of Dayton. He was a three-year varsity letterman with the Flyers after playing on the freshman team. In his sophomore season, he was a reserve on the 25-4 record NIT runner-up team which lost in overtime to Xavier after beating Fordham and St. John's. At Dayton, he received the first John L. Macbeth Scholar-Athlete Award in 1958. He graduated in 1960 in Electrical Engineering and received a master's degree from Case Institute of Technology. He returned to UD as an instructor for two years, teaching the school's first graduate digital computer courses. At the time, Dayton was one of only four colleges to offer computer courses. He then joined the business world, working for 12 years for Intel Corp.

Don Sutherin (Athlete 1950s)



Don Sutherin (Toronto High School, Class of 1954). A three-sport, 12-letter winner for the Red Knights, he earned All-Ohio, All-OVAC, All-Valley and All-Eastern Ohio football honors as a senior when he scored 19 of Toronto's 24 TDs and accounted for 74 of the Red Knights' 95 first downs in a 5-4 record season.

The 185-pound two-way back-kick returner-punter-kicker scored 129 points and accounted for 2,355 yards for an average of 250 yards a game. He rushed for 1,022 yards and passed for 833 yards. On defense, he returned two of four pass interceptions for scores.

He also led the Red Knights to a 16-2 regular season basketball record, the second best mark in school history at that time.

He earned a football scholarship to Ohio State University and lettered all three varsity seasons as a two-way back-kick returner-kicker-punter on two Big Ten Conference title teams. As a senior, on a 9-1 record team, he kicked the winning 34-yard-field which decided a 10-7 Rose Bowl victory over Oregon.

Drafted in the eighth round by the New York Giants, he started a 13-year pro career as a defensive back-placekicker. He played two seasons in the NFL with the Giants and Pittsburgh Steelers and played 11 years in the Canadian Football League with Hamilton, Ottawa and Toronto.

A perennial CFL All-Star, he played in eight Grey Cup title games in 10 years and was on four championship teams. When he retired, he was the all-time scoring leader in the CFL and held 18 CFL records. He also served as a CFL scout and assistant coach from 1981-91.

In 1992, he was inducted into the CFL Hall of Fame. He also is inducted into the Toronto High School and Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Halls of Fame. He resides in Hartville, Ohio, where he taught at Lake High School and served as football coach before retiring in 1997.

Larry Duck (Athlete 1960s)



Larry Duck (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1962). Winning and Larry Duck go hand-in-hand.

The prep gridiron legend was one of the key pieces in the Purple Riders' amazing success in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The punishing and powerful Duck was a three-year grid starter for Ferry.

What is most remarkable about his illustrious grid career was the fact that he never lost a game as the Purple Riders went 30-0. As a sophomore, Duck started at middle guard for the Ferrians, coached by Hayden Buckley. As a junior, he started at both linebacker and fullback as rookie coach Bob Wion guided another 10-0 campaign. Duck's contributions did not go unnoticed as he was first-team all-OVAC and co-captain of the all-Valley team. Duck's senior year was even more amazing as Wion's charges rolled to yet another 10-0 season. Duck hauled in a myriad of post-season honors. He was named captain of the all-OVAC and all-Valley teams and earned first-team all-Ohio plaudits as a fullback. He was named to the Senior Scholastic All-American Team while also gaining a spot in the Ohio North-South All-Star Game in Canton. Moreover, he was named UPI "Back of the Year" after averaging 6.6 yards a carry, scoring 12 touchdowns and gaining 911 yards.

The 6 ft., 220-pound Duck was no one-sport wonder, as he was a starter in basketball while also excelling in track. He putted the shot more than 50 feet and twirled the discus better than 150 feet, both prodigious distances in that era.

Duck accepted a scholarship to WVU and subsequently led the Mountaineers' freshman team in rushing. His stay in Morgantown was short-lived as he transferred to Memphis State University. The move worked out exceptionally well as Duck started three years at middle guard. His teammates voted him MVP following his senior year. Duck was also chosen to play in the prestigious Blue-Gray All-Star Game in Alabama.

Duck's prolific play led him to being drafted by the Canadian Football League. He opted to remain at Memphis as a graduate assistant. He returned home and accepted a teaching position at Martins Ferry High in 1970. He spent the next 30 years at his alma mater, teaching, coaching and also serving a stint as athletic director. He guided the Ferry boys' basketball team to a 20-5 record and a district championship in 1982. He later coached the girls" team to much success.

Joe Niekro (Athlete 1960s)



Joe Niekro (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1962). The younger half of the most successful brothers pitching tandem in Major League Baseball history, Joe carved his pro niche after distinguishing himself on the mound at the prep and collegiate levels.

Niekro pocketed 221 Major League wins as he and older brother Phil teamed for 539 victories, still the professional high water mark.

His athletic feats took root at Bridgeport High, where he was more than just a pitching standout. Niekro, in addition to his baseball accolades, was an all-OVAC basketball player at the Kirkwood-based school. Niekro was a major player in the Bulldogs capturing three straight Class AA baseball sectional and district titles, the largest class in Ohio at that time.

He closed out his prep career in stellar fashion, tossing a no-hitter against Martins Ferry in the sectional semifinals. He was honored as an all-Eastern Ohio baseball selection. Baseball had no OVAC All-Star team at that time.

Following his successful Bridgeport tenure, the Blaine resident matriculated to West Liberty State College where played both baseball and basketball for the Hilltoppers. Niekro helped pitch the Gold & Black of legendary Coach George Kovalick to the 1964 NAIA national title.

His collegiate fetes helped propel Niekro to a 22-year Major League career. He pitched for seven teams during his career, with 11 seasons as a member of the Houston Astros. He won 21 games for the Astros in 1979 and followed that with 20 more victories in 1980.

During the 1979 campaign, he made the National League All-Star team, leading the senior circuit in wins and shutouts (5). He won the Sporting News Pitcher of the Year Award and was runner-up to Bruce Sutter in the Cy Young voting. Niekro pitched in one World Series, that coming in 1987 with the Minnesota Twins. Joe hit one major league home run, that coming off brother Phil in 1976.

Niekro died Oct. 26, 2006 after suffering a brain aneurysm, but his legacy lives on through The Joe Niekro Foundation created by his only daughter, Natalie. The foundation's proceeds are donated to various hospitals in an effort to expand aneurysm treatment and research.

Less Browne (Athlete 1970s)



Less Browne (East Liverpool High School, Class of 1979). From Columbiana County, to Colorado, to Canada, Browne was an all-star football player at every stop.

Browne was a three-sport standout at East Liverpool, with football being his forte.

His grid heroics are highlighted by eight kickoff or punt returns for touchdowns under the late Ted Maley. In his senior year at East Liverpool, Browne rushed for 992 yards and scored 56 points in earning second-team all-Ohio honors.

Browne was also a standout basketball player and sprinter for the Potters while also owning the distinction of being his senior class president. He was chosen East Liverpool Review "Player of the Year" in 1978.

The versatile gridder was recruited to Colorado State as a running back. He quickly and seamlessly made the transition to defensive back, starting in the Rams' secondary for three years. The 5 ft. 11, 170-pounder led Colorado State in interceptions in 1980.

Following his stellar collegiate career, Browne signed as a free agent with the Hamilton Tiger-Cats in 1984 and he wasted no time making his presence felt north of the border. He earned all-Eastern and CFL all-star awards as a defensive back in 1985 and 1986. Browne moved on to star for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers from 1989-91. During the latter two years, he established CFL records for most interception return yards in a season with 273 and 267, respectively. After one year with the Ottawa Rough Riders, one in which he again led the league in interception return yardage, Browne closed out his CFL career with the British Columbia Lions in 1994. The Lions captured the coveted Grey Cup that season. Browne set league records for most career interceptions (87) and most regular-season interception return yardage (1,508). After his playing days, Browne went on to serve as an assistant coach in the CFL.

Halls of Fame are nothing new to Browne. He was inducted into the East Liverpool Hall of Fame in 1993 and he was later inducted into the Canadian Football Hall of Fame.

Mike Wright (Athlete 1970s)



Mike Wright (Wellsville High School, Class of 1976). Regarded as one of the most versatile athletes in a tradition-rich school, Wright etched his name in the Tigers' football and basketball record books.

Wright starred at quarterback for three years and also was a four-year starter at point guard for Coach Bobby Dawson's hoop juggernaut.

The 6 ft. 3, 185-pound dual-threat quarterback guided the up-river Tigers to their best three-year run in school grid history, compiling a sparkling 24-6 card, highlighted by a school-best 9-1 ledger in his junior year. Wellsville went 8-2 in Wright's senior year, with both blemishes by a single point. Wright was a two-time all-OVAC first-team honoree while also garnering all-District honors. He was one of the valley's most prolific gridders, accumulating 1,218 yards in total offense and 15 TDs.

Wright was even more impressive on the hardwood.

As a mere frosh, he played an integral role in the Tigers winning 18 of 23 games, good for Class AA sectional and district championships. As a sophomore Wright, combining craftiness with athleticism, sparkled in a 21-1 season, which saw the Tigers gain the No. 1 ranking in the UPI poll. Wellsville followed that with an OVAC Class AA championship in Wright's junior campaign. The Tigers went 19-2 and again claimed the top spot in the UPI poll.

That set the table for a senior basketball season like no other in Wellsville boys' hoop history.

Wright led Wellsville to its first-ever state tournament berth. The spotless Tigers fell to Dayton Roth in the state tourney semifinals. The season also saw the Columbiana Countians pocket another OVAC Class AA crown. For his efforts, Wright was named Eastern District "Player of The Year" while garnering second-team all-Ohio honors from the Associated Press and third-team all-state plaudits from UPI. The two-time all-OVAC pick was named captain of the all-Valley team his final year, in which he averaged 15.1 points per game.

Wright accepted a football grant-in-aid to Bowling Green State University. Wright landed the starting quarterback job his junior year, passing for more than 1,800 yards. He followed that with more than 1,100 passing yards as a senior while earning all-Mid American Conference honors.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Melissa Hammond (Athlete 1980s)



Melissa Hammond (Shadyside High School, Class of 1989). This former Lady Tiger was a standout in three sports during her prep career, but it was basketball where she shined the brightest.

Hammond was a four-year letterwinner for the Lady Tigers who went onto a four-year career at West Liberty State College, etching her name into history at both schools.

At Shadyside, Hammond was a prolific shooter en route to her school-record 1,516 points. She drained 112 three-point goals. Her 46 points, as a junior, during in a game against Buckeye North is also tops in school history.

During her junior season, Hammond became just the second female in Ohio Valley history to average at least 30 points a game at 30.2. She was more than a scorer, however, as she averaged 9.1 rebounds, 6.2 assists, 5.0 steals and drilled 67 three-point goals.

As a senior, Hammond averaged 28.1 points a game and was named all-Ohio Division IV State Player of the Year by UPI. She also averaged 9.5 rebounds, 8.1 assists, 6.5 steals, shot 48 percent from the floor, 80.1 percent at the line and 58 percent from three-point range.

Hammond was named second-team all-Ohio by The Associated Press twice and was selected to the Ohio North-South All-Star Game. She was captain of the all-OVAC team twice.

Hammond also doubled as a softball player and thrower for the track team.

She earned four letters in softball and three more in track. She was an all-OVAC first team selection three times in softball and once an all-Ohioan.

In track, she was an all-Eastern District performer in the shot put and discus.

At West Liberty, Hammond was a four-year basketball starter. She scored 2,150 points from 1990-93, which is still the West Liberty record and third-best in WVIAC history. Hammond, who also starred in softball at WLSC, was the second female athlete to be inducted to the West Liberty Sports Hall of Fame.

Joanna Bernabei (Athlete 1990s)



Joanna Bernabei (Weirton Madonna High School, Class of 1993). This former Lady Blue Don was one of the most prolific and unselfish basketball players from the Ohio Valley.

Bernabei helped to guide the Lady Blue Dons to three straight state tournament appearances and, during her senior season of 1992, Madonna brought home the school's second state championship with a brilliant 24-2 record.

During that 1992 campaign, Bernabei averaged 17.5 points, six rebounds, seven assists and five steals per game while surpassing the 1,000-point mark. All told, she finished her prep career with 1,002 points and more than 500 career assists.

After her senior season, Bernabei was named captain of the West Virginia Class A All-State team and captain of the OVAC Class A-AA West Virginia team when basketball was a fall sport. She also competed in both the OVAC and North-South all-star games. All told, Bernabei was a three-time all-stater. She was a second team choice as a sophomore and a first team selection as a junior.

While basketball was where Bernabei made her mark, she also excelled for Madonna in track and field as well as tennis, earning letters in each sport. In 1993, Bernabei brought two gold medals home from the West Virginia state track meet. She was a part of the winning 4x200-meter relay as well as the winning shuttle hurdle relay. She ran a leg on the state runner-up 4x100-meter relay team. During the 1992 tennis season, Bernabei was a part of an OVAC-winning doubles team in tennis.

Bernabei completed her degree in 1997 from West Liberty State College. During her career with the Lady Hilltoppers, she scored 1,317 points and finished with 1,107 assists, which is the NCAA Division II record. During her senior season, Bernabei was named WVIAC Player of the Year and Division II All-American after helping to lead WLSC to a NCAA Tournament appearance. She was named first team all-conference in the WVIAC all four years and was inducted to the West Liberty Athletic Hall of Fame in 2002.

Bernabei entered the coaching ranks at West Virginia Wesleyan. She was there for a year and has also worked at Eastern Kentucky, West Virginia and the University of Maryland where she won a national championship ring as an assistant coach and recruiting coordinator.

Jeff Sweitzer (Athlete 1980s)



Jeff Sweitzer (Brooke High School, Class of 1987). This former Bruin was once described by his high school coach, Paul "Bud" Billiard, as the best player he ever coached.

He's definitely one of the most decorated Bruins to come from the storied program when it was the Ohio Valley kingpin.

Sweitzer helped lead the Bruins to back-to-back appearances in the West Virginia state championship game as a quarterback during his junior and senior seasons. He was a four-year mainstay for the program, spending time as a running back, defensive back and kick returner before shifting to quarterback.

As a senior, when the Bruins finished 11-2 as the state runner-up, Sweitzer set an Ohio Valley record for total yardage with 3,399. He also accounted for 36 touchdowns. Of his yardage total, he had 2,203 passing; 674 rushing and 522 on kick returns.

After that senior season, Sweitzer, who also shined in baseball for the Bruins, repeated on the first team all-state squad and was named the captain of the offensive unit. He was also runner-up for the Kennedy Award that season. He was twice named all-OVAC and all-Valley and was the Gatorade State Player of the Year. He was also listed in the USA Today as West Virginia Player of the Year and an honorable mention to the paper's All-American Team.

Sweitzer then accepted a scholarship to the University of Akron. As was the case at Brooke, Sweitzer began as a kick returner and running back before becoming the quarterback for his final two seasons.

In two years, Sweitzer passed for 2,744 which is 10th on Akron's career listing. He passed for 1,599 yards as a junior.

Kyle Rose (Athlete 1990s)



Kyle Rose (River High School, Class of 1990). This three-sport Pilot athlete was a standout on and off the field during his four years in Hannibal, earning four letters in baseball to go along with three letters each in wrestling and football.

Baseball was where Rose made his presence felt for the Pilots. He was a four-year mainstay at catcher and in the heart of the Pilots' batting order. He batted .366 as a freshman, .473 as a sophomore, .500 as a junior and .536 as a senior en route to two OVAC Player of the Year awards. As a sophomore, Rose had an on-base percentage of .695 and he was 40-of-42 stealing bases. That mark is still an Ohio Valley standard. All told, he hit 13 home runs and drove 76 runs, but missed 11 games as a senior after a bout with mono.

After his senior campaign, he was named first-team all-Ohio, all-Eastern District, all-OVAC and all-Valley. He played in both the Ohio and OVAC all-star games.

In football, Rose played tailback for the Pilots and racked up all sorts of yardage and a host of honors. As a senior, he was first team all-Eastern District, all-OVAC and all-Valley after rushing for 800 yards and scoring eight touchdowns. For his career, Rose amassed 1,532 yards and 14 touchdowns in three seasons. He was also a defensive standout with 183 total tackles, six sacks, four interceptions and seven fumble recoveries.

His wrestling career didn't begin until he was a sophomore, but he picked it up quickly. As a soph, he finished 15-12, but turned it on as a junior and went 27-8. He was fourth at the OVAC Wrestling Tournament and advanced to the Ohio District Tournament. He fully arrived in his grappling career as a senior. Posting a 36-3 record, Rose advanced to the OVAC finals before falling. He then won the sectional and district titles at 152 pounds to qualify to the state tournament where he advanced to the finals and settled for the silver medal. He finished with a 78-23 record.

While having plenty of options about continuing his athletic career at the collegiate level, Rose accepted a scholarship to Mercer College in Georgia to play baseball. Playing in every game as a freshman, Kyle batted .294 and was chosen as conference freshman of the year. However, his career and life underwent a cruel twist on Dec. 12, 1991 when he was involved in a car accident. Rose survived, but is confined to a wheelchair as a paraplegic. After spending six months in and out of surgeries and therapies, Rose went back to school at Ohio University Eastern for two years and then, in 1994, enrolled at West Liberty State College where he later earned his degree in secondary education in mathematics. In 1998, Rose was hired at his prep alma mater as a math teacher. He's also since earned his master's degree from Marygrove College. His handicap didn't prevent from staying involved in sports as he was named head baseball coach of his alma mater in 1998 and he held the post until 2007. He led the Pilots to the OVAC title in 2003.

Class of 2011

OVAC Hall of Fame

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Richard 'Dick' Thurnes (OVAC 'Contributor)



Richard "Dick" Thurnes (Benwood Union High School, Class of 1946). During a 17-year career as a head football coach at three different spots, Thurnes won an impressive 75 percent of his games (112-36-7). Even more impressive, however, was the fact that five Thurnes-coached teams posted undefeated records.

His first stop was Cameron High School, where he compiled a three-year mark of 18-6-1, highlighted by an unbeaten (7-0-1) team in 1956 which was ranked No. 2 among West Virginia small school teams.

Thurnes then moved on to Warren Consolidated High School, serving as head coach for 12 years (1958-69) and posting a 78-26-6 mark. His teams put together unbeaten seasons in 1961, '62, '64 and '67. The first three of those teams won OVAC Class A championships while all four were Eastern Ohio Athletic League kingpins.

After stepping aside for a couple of years, he returned to coach the newly-consolidated Buckeye South High in its first two seasons (1972-73), posting a combined 16-3-1 record.

He received several "Coach of the Year" awards - from the Wheeling Intelligencer in 1964; The Times Leader in 1967; and the Eastern Ohio Athletic League in 1961, '62, '65 and '67; and the AP Eastern District in 1964 and '67.

Thurnes was also the recipient of the Belmont Hills Country Club's 27th Annual Achievement Football Coaches Award in 1965 and the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club's Outstanding Achievement Award in 1967.

He was inducted into the Ohio Valley Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1985.

Thurnes was also a long-time assistant basketball coach to fellow OVAC Hall of Famer Henry Lazasz and he also coached baseball, track and golf at various times during his career.

In high school, Thurnes was a three-year letterman in football as a center-linebacker, gaining third team all-West Virginia recognition and first team all-OVAC honors.

He went on to play at West Liberty State College in the "Golden Era" of Coach Joe Bartell, starting at center on two undefeated teams and playing in the Pythion Bowl and the Smoky Mountain Bowl, both Hilltopper victories.

Charles E. Petty (OVAC 'Family')



Charles E. Petty (Pomeroy High School). The entire Ohio Valley Athletic Conference owes a debt of gratitude to Petty and the other eight "Founding Fathers.".

Little did that small group know back in 1943 when they brought together 20 schools from both sides of the Ohio River that they would establish what would become (as of 2011) a 50-school bi-state conference, regarded by most as the largest functional high school conference in the nation.

The original OVAC member schools included Bellaire, Follansbee, Linsly, Martins Ferry, Moundsville, Powhatan, Shadyside, St. John Central, Steubenville, Steubenville Catholic Central, Tiltonsville, Triadelphia, Union, Warwood, Weir, Wellsburg, West Liberty, Wheeling, Wheeling Central Catholic and Yorkville.

Petty was a key cog in the OVAC in its early years, serving as the first official executive secretary for 13 years from 1944-56, longer than anyone has been in that position except for Sam Mumley to this point.

Petty coached the pre-OVAC boys' track program at Triadelphia High School, winning the 1941 West Virginia one-class championship after finishing as runner-up four times and placing third twice.

After coaching and teaching mathematics at Triadelphia High, he served briefly as principal at Woodsdale Junior High. He then joined Linsly Military Institute in 1942-43, serving as athletic director and was the head basketball coach from 1944-51. His second team (1944-45) won the OVAC Class AA title with a 16-5 record. He also coached track and assisted in football at Linsly.

He served as Meet Director for several years at one of the Ohio Valley's premier high school track meets at Triadelphia – The Intelligencer Relays – which had a three decade run before ending in the 1950s.

Petty then moved to St. Petersburg, Florida in the summer of 1956 and taught in junior high until he passed away at age 57 in 1963.

Born in 1906 in Ripley, W. Va., he graduated from Pomeroy (Ohio) High School; attended the University of Florida for two years and graduated from the University of Illinois. He received a master's degree from the University of Pittsburgh.

John Kirker (Media)



John D. Kirker (Wellsburg High School, Class of 1934). Born in Follansbee is 1913, Kirker's first taste of the newspaper business came at the old Wellsburg Daily Herald as a high school student. He wrote sports and was eventually the managing editor of the paper when he left for the Army Air Corps in 1942.

Upon his discharge from the service in 1946, he began a 29-year run (1946-74) as sports editor of The Herald-Star newspaper in Steubenville until moving into the news department as a district editor for the remainder of his career. He was the longest-serving sports editor in the newspaper's history, covering all high school sports as well as local college sports and summer events.

He was inducted into the University of Steubenville Sports Hall of Fame in 1981; the Ohio Prep Sports Writers Hall of Fame in 1988; and the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame in 1989.

Kirker was a member of several high school all-star selection committees, including those choosing the All-Eastern District and All-Ohio teams.

He also served as an emcee at numerous local sports functions and was a ring announcer at local boxing events.

For Kirker, harness racing was a personal passion. He owned and trained 17 horses for many years, regularly attending the Little Brown Jug event in Delaware, Ohio, and contributing numerous articles to various harness racing publications.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

C.R. (Dick) Dei (Coaches)



C.R. (Dick) Dei (Wheeling Central High School, Class of 1959). He was the architect of the OVAC's most dominant boys' track program at Wheeling Park High.

During the school's first 13 years (1977-89), the Patriots won eight OVAC Class 4-A championships and finished second three times; won nine West Virginia Region titles and captured three West Virginia Class AAA state championships while finishing as the runner-up twice.

Under the guidance of Dei, who coached 22 All-America track honorees during his career, Park lost only two dual meets in 13 seasons.

He was named West Virginia Track Coach of the Year on two occasions and the Ohio Valley Track Coach of the Year by The Intelligencer twice.

The coach established one of the area's top invitational meets – the Pepsi Park Classic - which was later renamed the Dick Dei Track Classic. He designed Wheeling Park's all-weather track facility and is responsible for implementing the first photo-electric timing system at a West Virginia high school, with Park's system originally used at the West Virginia State meet in Charleston. He served as chairman of the OVAC Track Committee and the OVAC Track Championships; West Virginia Region Meet director; a member of the West Virginia State Track Meet Committee; and was a presenter at the WVU Track and Field Clinic.

Dei received the R.A. Thom Award in 1990 for West Virginia track Service and Contributions; and was named the OVAC Cal Giffin Track Official of the Year in 1995. He was also honored by the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club and the W.Va. Sports Writers Association.

Dei was inducted into the Wheeling Park Athletic Hall of Fame in 1998 and the West Liberty State College Hall of Fame in 2005.

Dei played football at Wheeling Central and West Liberty and earned a master's degree from West Virginia University. He began a 39-year teaching/coaching career in 1965 at Bellaire High, serving as head track coach and assistant in football. He also coached as a football assistant at Martins Ferry; head football coach at Adena; and head football and track coach at Wheeling High. He also served as defensive coordinator at Bethany College in 1980, helping the Bison to an NCAA Division III playoff berth. He passed away in 2007 at the age of 66.

Larry Shaw (Coaches)



Larry Shaw (Shady Spring High School, Class of 1973). Mention wrestling in the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference or anywhere in the state of West Virginia and no doubt Shaw's name comes to mind in a hurry. After all, Shaw was a fixture in the mat sport for 31 years.

He led the Bears on an incredible run of 13 consecutive West Virginia Class AA-A state championships from 1997-2009, a feat unmatched by any OVAC or West Virginia program in any sport. Prior to Oak Glen dropping to the AA-A ranks, Shaw-led teams posted five straight Class AAA runner-up finishes (1987-91).

In OVAC Tournament action, Shaw's teams won nine class titles, including eight in a row from 2001-2008 in Class 3-A. The Bears won the overall title five times (1991, 2002, 2004, 2005 and 2007). During his tenure, Shaw's teams won 13 OVAC dual meet titles (Class 4-A in 1985, '90 and '98 and Class 3-A in 1999, 2000, '01, '03, '04, '05, '06, '07, '08 and '09) and he finished with a career dual meet record of 330-96-4. He coached 51 state champion wrestlers and more than 160 others who earned all-state honors.

Shaw was named the OVAC all-sport Coach of the Year twice – in 2002 and 2007 – and the OVAC Wrestling Coach of the Year on 13 occasions. He was the West Virginia Class AA-A Wrestling Coach of the Year six times and is the only wrestling coach to be selected the West Virginia all-sport Coach of the Year by the W. Va. Sports Writers Association (2000). He was named the 2008 National Wrestling Coach of the Year by Wrestling USA Magazine and was a finalist for the award in 2004.

Shaw, a 1977 graduate of Concord College who earned his master's degree from Marshall University, is a past president of the W. Va. Wrestling Coaches Association; a past vice-president of the West Virginia Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame; and a former member of the WVSSAC and OVAC Wrestling Committees. He assisted in producing an instructional video for wrestling officials for the NFHS Officiating Wrestling On-Line Methods Course and has worked at countless wrestling clinics. Shaw was the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club's Co-Man of the Year in 2003; was inducted into the Raleigh County Wrestling Hall of Fame in 2000; the Lou Holtz Upper Ohio Valley Hall of Fame in 2009; the National Wrestling Hall of Fame in 2010 and earlier this year into the National High School Sports Hall of Fame by the National Federation of State High School Associations.

Plennie Clutter (Officials)



Plennie Clutter (Wheeling High School, Class of 1943). He ranks among the best officials of all-time in the Ohio Valley, spending 30 years as a football referee and 25 years as a basketball official.

Clutter's officiating career began at the urging of the late A. Wilson Murray, a charter member of the OVAC Hall of Fame in the officials' category, and he worked his way up from junior varsity games to the top of the officiating world in both sports.

He earned assignments to work four West Virginia state high school football championship games and three state basketball tournaments.

Clutter officiated numerous sectional and regional tournament games in West Virginia and worked several OVAC All-Star Football Games. He was also selected as the referee in the 1982 Ohio North-South All-Star Game.

He is an Honorary Life Member of both the Ohio Valley Basketball Officials and Ohio Valley Football Officials organizations. He was the recipient of the Robert Dawson Officials Award at the OVAC Basketball Classic in 2005.

Clutter also worked football and basketball games in the West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

As an athlete, Clutter was an all-West Virginia selection in football and basketball at Wheeling High. As a senior, he was named the all-state captain and led the Wildcats to the state basketball championship under coach V. Everett Brinkman.

He was offered a football scholarship to the University of Alabama, he entered the Navy during World War II. He played one year with the Philadelphia Naval Base team, and then after fulfilling his military obligation, he played professional basketball in England. When he returned home, he was selected to play in the 1946 OVAC All-Star Football Game.

Edgar Martin (Athlete - 1940s)



Edgar Martin (Warwood High School, Class of 1945). A multi-sport high school and college standout despite his size of 5-foot-4 and weighing between 130-145 pounds, he left his mark on the OVAC and Ohio Valley sports.

A three-time All-OVAC honoree in basketball (1944 and 1945) and football (1944), he helped the Vikings win the first OVAC Class A title and five-school City of Wheeling crown with a 9-1 record in 1944. In basketball, he was the leader of two OVAC title teams which went 14-6 and 22-3. The 1945 City of Wheeling title team also won the W. Va. section and region crowns and advanced to the one-class state tournament before bowing to Beckley Woodrow Wilson. As a senior on a 9-1 record football team, he returned a kickoff 85 yards to score in the team's only loss to Follansbee, 21-13. He was a third team all-state one-class selection.In basketball, he earned second team one-class all-state as a senior and scored 42 points — a rare total at the time — in a 100-68 win over Follansbee.

At Bethany College, he was a three-sport standout (football, basketball, baseball) and was a two-time All-West Virginia Conference basketball tournament honoree. As a senior, he averaged 22.5 points a game.

After coaching in high school at Jefferson Union and Linsly, he coached alma mater Bethany College for 11 years from 1956-66, including a 17-1 record Presidents' Athletic Conference title team in 1962 and an unbeaten 18-0 PAC championship club in 1964.

He finished his career at West Liberty State as athletic director from 1973-88 and also coached basketball from 1969-74. He was one of the original organizers of the current Beast of the East summer baseball tournament named in his honor. Martin died in 1989.

Bob Jeter (Athlete - 1950s)



Bob Jeter (Weir High School, Class of 1956). Possibly the most prominent name to bridge the transition from segregated schools into integrated education in the Ohio Valley. He was a multi-sport standout at segregated Dunbar High School in Weirton through his junior season of 1955. With integration in West Virginia, he finished at Weir High School and became the first black athlete to be recognized on the All-State football selections by the W. Va. Sports Writers Association. A two-way back, he was a third team choice.

In his one season at Weir High, he helped the Red Riders to an 8-1-1 record and the OVAC Class AA title.

Recruited by the University of Iowa, he became a three-season two-way regular. As a senior, the All-Big Ten honoree set a Rose Bowl rushing record in 1959 which lasted two decades before broken by USC's Marcus Allen. Jeter rushed for 191 yards on only nine carries and scored on a record 81-yard TD run in a 39-14 win over California.

After being selected to play in the East-West Shrine Game, he was the No. 2 draft choice of the Green Bay Packers in 1960 but opted to play in the Canadian Football League with the Vancouver B.C. Lions and the Hamilton Tiger Cats for two seasons. He then joined the Packers as a defensive back-wide receiver and played in three straight NFL winning championship games and started the first two Super Bowl games for the winning Packers in 1966 and 1967. An All-Pro twice and a Pro Bowl selection, he played eight NFL seasons and finished his career by playing three seasons with the Chicago Bears.

A member of the W. Va. Sports Hall of Fame and Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame, he was the 1970 Dapper Dan Man of the Year. Jeter died in 2008.

Jim McCormick (Athlete - 1950s)



Jim McCormick (Magnolia High School, Class of 1958). Arguably the No. 1 Blue Eagle basketball product, he set or tied 55 school records while playing only two varsity seasons.

As a senior, he earned All-OVAC Class A honors and All-W.Va. mention when he scored 613 points for a 29.2 per game average, both school records which lasted 45 years. He also scored 51 points in a game which has been tied, but not broken after five decades. He averaged 22.1 points for his career. He also played baseball for the Blue Eagles.

After high school, the 6-foot-3 guard prepped for a year at old Greenbrier Military in Lewisburg, W.Va., where he started on an unbeaten post-graduate team composed of several high school all-stars.

He enrolled at West Virginia University as an invited walk-on and was the second-leading scorer behind future All-American Rod Thorn on WVU's second-ever unbeaten freshman team.

In the third game of his sophomore season, he became a varsity starter for the rest of his career and, with Thorn, formed a top backcourt which led WVU to three Southern Conference titles and a pair of NCAA Tournament berths. He averaged double figures all three years and scored 1,156 career points which, at the time, was fifth all-time in WVU history behind four All-Americans — Jerry West, Rod Hundley, Mark Workman and Thorn. McCormick and Thorn were featured on the cover of the 1962 WVU Basketball Media Guide.

After twice earning All-Southern Conference second team and honorable mention All-America, he became Magnolia's only NBA draftee in the sixth round by the Cincinnati Royals, but a foot injury halted his pro career.

McCormick is a member of the WVU Sports Hall of Fame and was selected on the six-player 1956-65 All-Time WVU Team.

Rick Boron (Athlete - 1960s)



Richard L. Boron (St. John Central High School, Class of 1965). He was a three-sport performer for the Fighting Irish, but it was on the gridiron where he gained national recognition.

Boron blossomed under the tutelage of Coach Dan McGrew into a two-way star as a senior. The multi-talented gridder scored 126 points as a senior while rushing for 698 yards on just 91 carries. He also hauled in 28 passes for 563 additional stripes.

While Boron was an offensive dynamo, he was just as highly-regarded for his prowess at defensive back. As a senior, he intercepted three enemy passes and also returned a punt 88 yards for a TD. McGrew, a former Purdue and professional gridder, called Boron "the best defensive back I ever saw."

For his senior exploits, Boron was named to the prestigious *Parade Magazine* All-America High School Football Team. He was also a first team all-OVAC, all-Eastern Ohio and AP all-Ohio honoree.Boron also lettered four years in baseball at SJC and two seasons in basketball.

He turned down an offer to play at Notre Dame and instead accepted a scholarship from Coach Bo Schembechler to play at Miami of Ohio. It was a decision Boron never regretted. He was a three-year regular for the Redskins as a defensive back. He was accorded second team all-Mid-American Conference honors as a junior and first team plaudits as a senior. He left the Oxford-based campus with several grid records, including most interceptions in a season (7) and freshman record for interceptions (5). Boron finished his Miami career in third place on the career interception list (14).

Boron distinguished himself in the prep coaching ranks as well. He served as head coach at Wadsworth High for five seasons, compiling a 39-9 mark. During that tenure, he received a host of coach of the year awards, including the Cleveland Plain Dealer and the *Akron Beacon Journal*. Boron left Wadsworth to serve as an assistant at Miami before heading into private business.

Randy Donahue (Athlete - 1960s)



Randy Donahue (Warren Consolidated High School, Class of 1965). The area that makes up the Buckeye Local School District has had countless stellar football players in its annals. Few, if any, enjoyed the success that Donahue did, however.

The 6 ft. 1, 235-pounder is regarded as one of the best lineman in Ohio Valley history, and that lofty designation is well supported. Donahue was the first OVAC player to be accorded first team *Parade Magazine* All-America honors (1964). In the 1960s, Ohio was divided into just two classes in football, but he still managed the respect and admiration of coaches throughout the state as he was voted a three-time first-team AP all-Ohio Class A selection (defensive tackle as a sophomore and junior and offensive tackle as a senior).

The line great was a four-year starter for Coach Dick Thurnes' Blue Ramblers. Thurnes, also a 2011 OVAC Hall of Fame inductee, put together an amazing string of success in the early '60s and Donahue was a major cog in that machine. Donahue tasted defeat just once in four years as the Ramblers went 9-0-1, 9-0, 7-1-1 and 9-0 in that span. Three of those grid juggernauts captured OVAC Class A championships.

Donahue, who also excelled on the baseball diamond, spearheaded a Warren Consolidated defense which recorded seven shutouts in his senior campaign. He recorded 64 tackles and 28 assists that season. His defensive stats as a sophomore are striking. In just nine games, the two-way terror registered 112 tackles and 52 assists.

After such a stellar prep career and with ideal size, it is no wonder Donahue was showered with college football scholarship offers. He eventually signed a grant-in-aid with West Virginia University. Fate dealt him a cruel blow, however, as in the summer before he left for Morgantown, Donahue lost the vision in one of his eyes in a freak wood-cutting accident. Much to his credit, he still attempted to play for the Mountaineers, but the handicap was too much to overcome. He returned home and took a job with Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel and he also served many years as a Warren Township trustee. Donahue passed away several years ago.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Crag Miller (Athlete - 1970s)



Craig Miller (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1979). He was an all-star football player and standout basketball player for the Bulldogs, but it was in track and field where Miller is remembered as one of the best to ever perform in the Ohio Valley.

Miller had superb size at 6 ft. 3 and 200 pounds to be the punishing fullback-linebacker and the rugged post in basketball that he was, but that size was combined with great speed which he utilized to excel in three distinct events in track. His all-around versatility drew him the tag as the Bulldogs' most versatile athlete since John Havlicek.

Miller was the greatest discus thrower of his era. He used his elongated frame and superb athleticism to become the first Ohio Valley prepster to twirl the platter more than 170 feet, establishing a new valley standard with his 172-10 toss in the district meet as a senior. In the 32 years since, only two discus throwers have bettered that mark. Miller was state runner-up in the discus as a senior while also placing second in the Bellaire Relays as a junior and senior. The powerful Bulldog also ranked with the premier shotputters during that time, owning a best of 52 feet. Miller was equally adept on the track where he was a prime-time high hurdler, recording the best time in the Ohio Valley as a senior with a scorching 14.7 clocking.

Miller was also a three-year letterman at Bridgeport in basketball where he was the leading rebounder for Coach Frank Baxter each season. Miller averaged 15.4 points a game as a senior.

In football, he earned all-Ohio, all-OVAC and all-Valley honors after a senior year which saw him total 105 points, which included three field goals and 21 kicking PATs, another sign of his all-around talents. He was a blocking fullback, but still managed 422 yards on just 90 totes for the 9-1 Bulldogs of Coach Dave Bruney. He also averaged 40 yards per punt.

He opted to accept a football scholarship to Miami of Ohio University, where he lettered four years as a tight end and was accorded all-MAC honors as a junior.

Pat Miller (Athlete - 1970s)



Pat Miller III (Shadyside High School, Class of 1979). He was able to do what few athletes can do, that being a star in two sports during the same season.

Miller was nothing short of sensational for the Tigers in baseball, lettering four times. His tremendous diamond time did nothing to adversely impact his track career where he was equally as exceptional.

The talented Tiger was also a stellar gridder and also possessed the prowess to graduate with a 3.94 GPA.

Miller captained the Tiger baseball team both as a junior and a senior, the latter season one in which he hit for a sizzling .431 average. That proved a springboard to be selected to participate in the All-Ohio Baseball Series.

He was selected an EOBL all-star all four seasons and all-Eastern District three seasons. Miller's diamond exploits earned him a baseball scholarship to Ohio University.

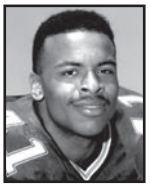
While his prep baseball resume is quite glittering, it may take a backseat to his track and field accomplishments. Miller achieved the ultimate by winning the state pole vault title in 1979. He also finished sixth in the high hurdles in the same state meet. He won virtually every pole vault competition as a senior, except for the Bellaire Relays which was in its heyday. Miller was third in the pole vault and third in the high hurdles in that meet, finishing as the top local scorer in the state's second-largest meet at the time.

The terrific Tiger was a two-time all-Valley honoree and was selected to The Intelligencer's all-Decade Track Team.

He enjoyed much gridiron success as well. The hard-running Tiger earned all-Ohio honors both his junior and senior campaigns. The three-year grid letterman was first team all-OVAC, all-Valley and all-Eastern District his last two seasons.

Miller, who served as the Tigers' captain as a senior, followed in his father's footsteps and played in the OVAC All-Star Game.

Willie Clay (Athlete - 1980s)



Willie Clay (Linsly School, Class of 1988). This former Cadet did it all during his four years on the Wheeling campus. While earning letters in three sports, it was on the football field where he made his biggest impact to the Cadets' program.

Clay was the unquestioned leader and most recognized player on teams which won 23 consecutive games and recorded the first two undefeated seasons in the school's history when it finished 10-0 in 1986 and 9-0 in 1987. Excelling as a defensive back, wide receiver and kick returner, Clay earned numerous postseason honors during his career. As a senior, despite the Cadets' run-first offensive schemes, Clay managed to catch 30 passes for 428 yards and five touchdowns. He also took two kickoffs back for touchdowns and had five interceptions. He was named all-State, all-OVAC and all-Valley. He was the captain of the big-school team after his senior season.

On the basketball court, Clay led the Cadets in his senior season with a 17.5 points per game average while shooting 48 percent from the floor. He also passed out 170 assists en route to earning all-OVAC and all-Valley.

In the spring, Clay lit up area baseball diamonds. He batted .423 as a senior and was named all-OVAC and all-Valley.

Despite his success on so many surfaces, it was football that was his calling at the next level. Clay accepted a scholarship to attend Georgia Tech University where he earned all-ACC honors twice. At one time, Clay held the Yellow Jackets' school record for interceptions (16) after starting in the defensive backfield for three seasons.

In 1992, Clay was drafted in the eighth round by the Detroit Lions and played eight seasons in the NFL. He also played for the New England Patriots for three seasons and one with the New Orleans Saints. All told, he played in 118 NFL games and started 90.

Sharon Vincent (Athlete - 1980s)



Sharon Vincent (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 1981). This Lady Red Devil was easily one of the most decorated and successful sprinters ever to grace the ovals in the Ohio Valley.

Vincent finished her prep career with eight state medals and led St. C. to its only state championship in school history in June of 1981. In that state meet her senior season, Vincent capped an undefeated campaign in both the 100 and 200-meter dashes by sprinting to the OHSAA state championships in both events in 12.18 and 24.79, respectively.

Vincent won a state gold as a sophomore as well as a member of the Lady Red Devils' 440-yard relay team. She was the state runner-up in the 200 and placed fifth in the 100 that season. Prior to breaking through in Columbus as a senior, Vincent was the state runner-up in the 100 and bronze medalist in the 200 as a junior.

The only individual loss Vincent suffered as a senior came in the 400-meter dash at the district meet where she took third, but still ran an impressive 58.7. En route to her state meet performances, athletes competed in sectionals and districts where she won 19 championships. She was a three-time sectional and district 100 and 200-meter champion.

At the OVAC meet, Vincent won a total of 12 conference championships. She was a three-time champion in both the 100 and 200. At the time of her graduation, Vincent held eight meet records and three all-time Ohio Valley records.

Vincent, who still holds the 100, 200 and 400-meter dash school records, was named St. Clairsville's Most Valuable Athlete four times and was also named all-District Athlete of the Year. She also competed in the prestigious Midwest Meet of Champions in the 100-meter dash in 1981.

After her prep career, Vincent accepted a scholarship to Eastern Kentucky University. She competed there for two seasons before transferring to The Ohio State University where she completed her bachelor of arts degree in economics.

Vincent, who was inducted to the St. Clairsville Athletic Hall of Fame as a member of the 1981 state championship team and then in 2007 as an individual athlete, later earned a master's degree from Otterbein.

T.J. Hannig (Athlete - 1990s)



T.J. Hannig (Linsly School, Class of 1996). This three-sport Cadet standout excelled as an all-around athlete, but it was on the soccer field where he made his biggest impact.

Hannig earned four letters for the Cadets as their starting goalkeeper for teams which posted a 70-13-10 record. Included in those seasons were two OVAC all-class titles in 1992 and 1994. The Cadets were winning these titles because opposing teams just couldn't get the ball past Hannig, who set the Ohio Valley record with 41 career shutouts. Overall, he owned a 0.88 goals against average. His exploits didn't go unnoticed. He was twice named all-OVAC and captained the all-Valley team as a senior. He was also named Gatorade Player of the Year and a *Parade* All-American.

On the basketball court, Hannig blossomed as a senior, scoring nearly 17 points a game and grabbing eight rebounds en route to all-OVAC and all-Valley accolades. In track and field, Hannig competed in a bevy of events, but it was in the long jump where he stood out. He set the OVAC record with a mark of 21 feet, 7 3/4 inches and won three conference titles (high hurdles, high jump and long jump).

Hannig accepted a scholarship for soccer to the University of Indiana where he started in net from 1997-2000 and finished No. 1 in IU history with 42 shutouts and second in victories (63). The Hoosiers played in four consecutive NCAA Final Fours, winning the NCAA titles in 1998 and 1999, defeating Stanford (3-1) and Santa Clara (1-0), respectively. Hannig and OVAC and NBA Hall of Famer John Havlicek (Bridgeport High) are the only two OVAC products to play in three consecutive NCAA title games. Hannig's name is all over the Indiana University record book. He ranks seventh at IU with 176 saves, and the 23 victories in 1998 are tied for the most in a season.

After his collegiate career, Hannig was selected in the MLS Draft and spent time with D.C. United. He also played for the Pittsburgh Riverhounds.

Quincy Wilson (Athlete - 1990s)



Quincy Wilson (Weir High, Class of 1999). This former Red Rider was a multi-sport standout, but it was on the football field where he earned his highest acclaim.

Wilson rewrote Ohio Valley and West Virginia record books as he helped lead the Red Riders to the 1998 West Virginia Class AA state championship.

As a senior on the state championship squad, Wilson became the first Ohio Valley and West Virginia prep athlete to accumulate 3,000 yards in a season. All told, Wilson rushed for 3,262 yards. He scored an Ohio Valley record 47 touchdowns and finished with 282 points, which is second best all-time in the Ohio Valley, trailing only Jack Simons of New Cumberland, who scored 288 points in 1919.

Wilson, a four-year letterman, finished his prep career with 6,162 yards, but 5,624 of those came during his junior and senior seasons since he played primarily on defensive during his first two seasons. For his career, he scored 93 touchdowns and 564 points, with all but seven TDs and 44 points came during his junior and senior seasons. Wilson took his play to another level when the postseason rolled around. He set all-time West Virginia records with 1,671 yards and 23 touchdowns in seven playoff games. Included is a single-game record of 327 yards. In 1998 state title game against Dupont, Wilson ran for 250 yards and two scores.

Wilson won nearly every postseason award imaginable. He was named Gatorade State Player of the Year and shared the Kennedy Award with Nitro's J.R. House after he finished fourth in the balloting as a junior. He was named first-team all-State twice and captained the All-Valley team and was twice named all-OVAC. He also played basketball at Weir High.

After accepting a scholarship to West Virginia University, Wilson fought his way up the depth chart and through a medical redshirt before bursting onto the scene in a big way in 2003. He ran for 1,380 yards and 12 touchdowns en route to being named WVU's Offensive MVP and won the team's award for all-around excellence. Wilson played in 44 games at WVU, running for 2,608 yards and 20 TDs. He also caught 20 balls.

Wilson was then selected in the seventh round as the 219th player taken by the Atlanta Falcons. He was released and eventually signed with the Cincinnati Bengals, with whom he spent parts of four seasons. He was also drafted in the inaugural UFL Draft by the Florida Tuskers.

Ashley Battle (Athlete - 2000s)



Ashley Battle (Linsly School, Class of 2000). When asked to name the greatest girls' basketball players in Ohio Valley history, this former Lady Cadets' name is always one of the first mentioned. And for good reason.

Battle arrived on the Linsly campus at the urging of some of her family and friends to get her away from the rough section of her hometown of Pittsburgh. She went to Linsly to take an admissions test prior to entering high school and seemingly the rest was history.

When she arrived at Linsly, the girls' basketball team was struggling, but she helped turn that around quickly and eventually led Linsly to an undefeated season in 1998-99.

At Linsly, she became the school's all-time leader in numerous statistical categories, including points (1,532), rebounds (823), assists (385) and steals (371).

She was named OVAC Class A Player of the Year four consecutive seasons and was a three-time all-State pick in West Virginia.

After receiving countless recruiting letters, Battle eventually chose to continue her career at the University of Connecticut over the likes of Duke, Penn State and Stanford.

At UConn, she joined with Dianna Taurasi and Maria Conlon and helped lead the Lady Huskies to three NCAA National Championships, including an undefeated season in 2003.

Battle was a standout on the defensive end of the floor as evidenced by the fact that she won the Big East Defensive Player of the Year award, but she also scored 1,000 career points.

Battle, who owns a degree in marketing and economics from UConn, was drafted by Seattle in the second round of the 2005 WNBA Draft. She then signed with the New York Liberty of the WNBA in 2006 and she also spent time playing for Seattle and San Antonio. All told, she appeared in 142 WNBA Games and averaged five points per game. She also played professionally in Spain in 2007 and 2008.

OVAC Hall of Fame

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PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Class of 2012

OVAC Hall of Fame

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Tom 'Bear' Bechtel (OVAC Family)



Tom "Bear" Bechtel (Wheeling Central High School, Class of 1969). Commissioner, director, official…Bechtel wears many hats in the athletic realm, and he wears them well.

He is a long-time member of the OVAC Softball Committee, currently serving as the OVAC Softball Commissioner and has been Game Director of the annual Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic since 2005.

As an official, Bechtel has worked area high school softball, basketball and football games dating back to 1974. He founded the Ohio Valley Board of Softball Umpires, serving as secretary for 31 years; was an Ohio Valley Officials Board officer for more than 20 years; and has officiated football playoff games in Ohio and West Virginia for more than 20 years. He has worked 26 state tournaments in softball and six state championship games in football.

He also umpires softball in the West Virginia Conference.

In 1990, he became the first West Virginia recipient of the National Federation of State High School Associations' Officials Award.

Bechtel has been director of the City of Wheeling Recreation Department since 1974, actively promoting various youth sports activities. He founded the Wheeling Recreation Summer Basketball League which has grown to more than 100 teams; organized the annual Wheeling Basketball Shootout which has brought numerous high profile athletes to the area; and oversees the J.B. Chambers I-470 Complex which hosts more than 2,000 baseball and softball games annually.

A basketball and baseball player at Wheeling Central High, he graduated from Wheeling College in 1973 and served as an assistant basketball coach there from 1974-78.

He has served as a color analyst for WTRF-TV on football and basketball broadcasts; worked as a radio announcer for basketball games; and was the public address announcer at Wheeling Jesuit University home basketball games. He is also director of the annual Undo's Catholic Basketball Tournament in Wheeling.

Bechtel received the Robert S. McKelvey Memorial Award from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club in 2008.

Burdell 'Jimmy' Carey (OVAC Contributor)



Burdell "Jimmy" Carey (Follansbee High School, Class of 1923). He is the only coach in the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference and the state of West Virginia to win state championships in three sports – football, basketball and baseball.

Carey got his first taste of coaching with 10 years at his alma mater, Follansbee High, before moving to Weir High to assist OVAC Hall of Famer Carl Hamill and begin a 25-year Red Rider career.

Carey coached Weir to W. Va. Class AAA football titles in 1957 (11-0), 1960 (10-1) and 1961 (10-1) and his 1958 team was 9-1, losing only to eventual state champion Parkersburg. In six seasons (1956-61), his teams posted a 52-11 record and won two OVAC Class AAA championships (1957 and 1958).

In basketball, Carey coached Weir for 13 seasons (1956-68), compiling a record of 178-115. His teams made the W. Va. Class AAA title game three straight years, winning in 1963 with a record of 20-5. The 1962 team was 24-1 and the 1964 team had a 23-2 record. Overall, his Red Rider hoop teams won seven sectional titles, five regional crowns and made four state tournament appearances while also winning two OVAC championships (1962 and 1964).

In baseball, he guided Weir to five state tournament berths and the one-class W. Va. state championship in 1959 while also winning four straight OVAC titles.

Carey was selected the West Virginia All-Sport Coach of the Year in 1958. He is a member of the West Virginia Sports Hall of Fame; the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame and the Weir High Hall of Fame.

Weir High named its football stadium in his honor.

At Follansbee High, Carey was a multi-sport athlete who went on to play three sports (football, basketball and baseball) at George Washington University before transferring and graduating from West Liberty State College.

Charles 'Red' Donley (Media)



Charles "Red" Donley (Wellsburg High School, Class of 1941). An early pioneer of radio and television broadcasting in the Ohio Valley, Donley got his start at WSTV-AM radio in 1946 where he served as play-by-play announcer for high school football and basketball games and was the station's sports director.

In 1954, when WTSV-TV Channel 9 (now WTOV) went on the air, Donley became the sports director and soon thereafter, was selected to work with Joe Tucker on Pittsburgh Steelers' broadcasts, a position he held from 1955-62.

He also announced horse racing at Wheeling Downs and Waterford Park from 1949-56.

In 1960, he left to become sports director at Channel 11 in Pittsburgh, a position he had for 10 years. During his days in Pittsburgh, Donley won five "Golden Quill" awards for distinguished news coverage, including one for a documentary he wrote and narrated on the late Art Rooney and two others (on Roberto Clemente and Pie Traynor) that are in the Baseball Hall of Fame.

In 1962, he was named to succeed legendary Ray Scott as play-by-play announcer for the University of Pittsburgh.

Donley rejoined Channel 9 in Steubenville in 1972 as news director and remained there he retired in 1988.

Donley received the President's Media Award from what was then the College of Steubenville in 1989; received an honorary degree from Jefferson Technical College in 1987 and an honorary bacalaureat degree from the College of Steubenville in 1989; was the recipient of the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club's Robert S. McKelvey Award in 1991; and was inducted into the Ohio AP Broadcasters Hall of Fame in 2006.

He also participated in many charitable projects including the United Way and Easter Seals and made countless appearances as a master of ceremonies at community events. His many contributions were recognized at a testimonial dinner in his honor back in 1979.

The road leading to the current WTOV-TV9 studio in Steubenville is named "Red Donley Drive" in his honor.

A World War II veteran who served in the Marine Corps, Donley passed away in 1998.

Gene Ammirante (Coaches)



Gene Ammirante (Wheeling Central Catholic High School, Class of 1969). When you think of Ammirante, you think of two things – passion and success. During his 30-year career as head boys' basketball coach at Bellaire High, "Coach A" displayed plenty of the former and achieved plenty of the latter.

Ammirante began his coaching career in 1976 as an assistant to Mark Matz at Bellaire before beginning a successful run as head coach of the Big Reds.

He compiled an impressive 471-205 career record at Bellaire, the all-time best coaching record in boys' basketball at the school. That included a 189-41 mark during the 1990s, an average of 19 wins per season during that 10-year span.

Bellaire High achieved Top 20 rankings in Ohio 15 times under Ammirante; won 14 Ohio Valley Athletic Conference championships; 14 sectional crowns; six district titles and one regional championship as Bellaire earned its first ever-trip to the OHSAA Division III State Tournament "Final Four" in 2003-04, tying the school record for wins (22) before losing to Versailles in double-overtime in the semifinals.

His teams posted two undefeated regular seasons, going 20-0 in 1993-94 and 2005-06; and two 19-1 records; and the 2005-06 team broke the school record with 23 victories.

Among Ammirante's numerous awards were "Coach of the Year" for Ohio Division II, the Eastern District and District 12 as well as the OVAC overall "Coach of the Year" in 2003-04; and the Bob Arnzen Award for 20 consecutive years at the same school (1996).

He was also selected to coach the South squad in the annual Ohio North-South All-Star Game in Columbus in 1997.

He served as Game Director for the Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic on two different occasions and is still active on the committee; founded and directed the OVAC Basketball Clinic for six years; is director of the Wheeling Recreation Department's Youth Basketball Program; and started the annual Saturday Morning Fundamental Feeder Program and Basketball Camp at Bellaire. He received the OVAC's Earl Haberfield Boys' Basketball Coaches Award in 2012.

Ammirante received his bachelor's degree from West Liberty State College in 1973 and his master's from West Virginia University in 1976.

Gary Sprague (Coaches)



Gary Sprague (Needham (Mass.) High School, Class of 1964). He piloted the Linsly School baseball program from 1974-2006, compiling an impressive 33-year record of 488-257-1, which ranks fourth all-time among Ohio Valley coaches.

He led the Cadets to 13 OVAC Tournament championships - more than any other conference coach (1982, '85, '86, '87, '89, '90, '91, '94, '95, '97, 2001, '03, '05, '06) and coached Linsly to five Eastern Ohio Baseball League titles (1987, '88, '90, '95 and '96).

Sprague was named OVAC "Coach of the Year in 1986 after guiding the Cadets to a 27-4 record and EOBL "Coach of the Year" three times.

He coached six athletes who went on to play professional sports – Heath Haynes, Ron Stephens, Kevin Tatar, Mike Coss and Mark Seaver in baseball and Willie Clay in the NFL. He also coached a total of 13 first team all-state players including two captains; five OVAC "Player of the Year" winners and four West Virginia American Legion "Player of the Year" selections.

He also coached freshman football at Linsly.

Sprague received the Carl R. Hamill Award from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club and was the recipient of the OVAC's Thomas E. Rataiczak Scorekeeper/Timer Award in 2009 after nearly three decades as the timer at Linsly basketball games.

Sprague graduated from West Virginia Wesleyan College in 1968.

Bill Tonini (Official)



Bill Tonini (Avella (Pa.) High School, Class of 1940). "Play ball!" Considering the fact that his career as an umpire spanned an incredible seven decades, perhaps no one has uttered those words more than Tonini.

He spent a total of 52 years working countless baseball games throughout the Ohio Valley and beyond from 1957-2010 while also serving 30 years as a football official and 10 years as a basketball referee.

His expertise as an umpire, primarily behind home plate calling balls and strikes, earned Tonini numerous high school post-season assignments, including five state tournaments in Ohio and five in West Virginia. He also umpired more than 30 years of OVAC Tournament action.

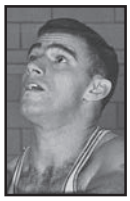
Tonini worked NCAA Division III College World Series games in Marietta a total of 10 times; several NCAA Division I games involving Ohio State and Ohio University; a host of American Legion games in the summer and three years in the minor leagues, including the Northwest League in Eugene, Oregon and Walla Walla, Washington.

He also was an instructor at Bill Barr's Umpire School in West Palm Beach, Florida.

Tonini is in the Western Pennsylvania Soccer Hall of Fame and he received a special award from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club.

A highly-decorated World War II veteran who received commendations from both the United States and France, the 90-year old Tonini resides in Hannibal.

Eugene 'Eudie' Joseph (Athlete - 1940s)



Eugene "Eudie" Joseph (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1945). A three-sport All-OVAC honoree in football, basketball and track, he was a major contributor to top-record Purple Rider football and basketball teams.

In basketball, playing for OVAC Hall of Fame Legend coach Floyd Baker, Joseph was a regular on teams which went 71-4 in three years including 21-2, with 20 straight wins, as a senior. He was a junior on a 26-1 record team which won the first OVAC Class AA title in 1944. That team lost its only game to eventual Ohio champion Middletown, 38-34, in the state tournament semifinals. Joseph, along with teammate and OVAC Hall of Famer Alex Groza, were all-tournament selections. Joseph scored 421 points —second on the team to Groza's OV record total of 628 points. As a sophomore, Joseph was a member of a 24-1 record team.

In football, he was co-captain of a 7-2-1 record team which won the first OVAC Class AA title and recorded eight shutouts. He earned All-Ohio UPI honors as well as All-OVAC and was a two-time All-Eastern Ohio selection at running back. Nicknamed the "Ghost" for his elusive style, he played on a 9-1 record team as a junior and Ferry was 22-6-1 in his three seasons.

In track, Joseph set an OVAC high hurdle record in the two-year-old meet as a junior and won the high jump. He didn't compete as a senior after being drafted for military duty.

After discharge, he enrolled at the University of Dayton and played four years of basketball with three as a starter on teams with school records of 24-8, 27-5 and 28-5. The last two years, the Flyers were runners-up in the National Invitation Tournament and also were NCAA regional semifinalist in his senior year of 1952.

He spent his entire 37-year professional career teaching and coaching at Linsly Military Institute where he was head coach of boys' basketball (1953-72) and track and assistant in football and also served as athletic director. His Cadet teams won three OVAC titles — 1971 basketball and 1961-62 in track. The top court records were 16-4 in 1957, 15-4 in 1971 and 15-3 in 1972. A Linsly scholarship is named in his honor.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Art Hehr (Athlete - 1950s)



Art Hehr (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1959). He graduated as the winningest career wrestler in the OVAC, with two straight unbeaten seasons capped by Ohio titles in 1958 and 1959 after placing third in the state meet as a sophomore. He was captain of the 1959 Ohio state championship team — the first for an OVAC member, coached by OVAC Hall of Famer George Kovalick. He won his last two titles at 127 pounds after competing at 120 pounds as a sophomore. He also won three consecutive OVAC titles on conference championship teams.

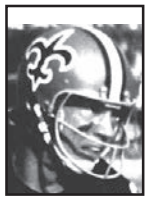
He also competed in football and was a member of the Bulldogs' first-ever unbeaten season in 1958 and the first Bridgeport team to defeat rival Martins Ferry in 1956.

After serving in the U. S. Army from 1959-62, he enrolled at West Liberty State where he was a member of the West Virginia Conference title teams in 1962 and 1963, also coached by Kovalick. He was injured and couldn't compete for part of his college career.

After graduation, he coached wrestling at Wheeling College and started the wrestling program at old Skyvue High School. He also coached Martins Ferry High to an OVAC title in 1968 as well as sectional and district crowns. He served as a wrestling official from 1970-86 and as athletic director at Skyvue for 28 years and Monroe Central two years plus three years as track coach at Skyvue.

Hehr was inducted into the Bridgeport High School Sports Hall of Fame in 2011 and was the recipient of the OVAC Wrestling Coaches "Mr. Mat" award in 2012.

Dan Abramowicz (Athlete - 1960s)



Dan Abramowicz (Steubenville Catholic Central High School, Class of 1963). This glue-fingered wide receiver had to make believers out of countless doubters every step of his brilliant football career.

The Crusaders' three-sport standout was deemed too slow and too small to make it in big-time college football. After he shredded that fallacy, Abramowicz did so even more emphatically on the professional level.

After a sparkling career at Steubenville Central where he was honored as an all-OVAC and all-Ohio wide receiver, the college recruiters were nowhere to be found, turned off by his pedestrian-like 4.8 40-meter clocking. His lone college scholarship offer came from Xavier University in Cincinnati.

Abramowicz made the most of that opportunity, and went on to enjoy a record-setting stay with the Musketeers.

Abramowicz established a host of Xavier receiving records during a brilliant four-year career, including 120 catches for 1,685 yards and 14 touchdowns.

His prodigious numbers resulted in him being tabbed by the New Orleans Saints in the 17th and final round of the 1967 NFL Draft. That 17th round pick turned out to be a gem for the Saints.

Abramowicz carved out a pro career that many first-rounders would relish.

He was instant impact in "The Big Easy," landing 50 passes for 721 yards and six touchdowns as he was one of the top contenders for NFL Rookie of the Year honors.

Two seasons later, Abramowicz led the league with 73 receptions. His biggest NFL achievement, however, was setting a league record for catching a pass in 104 consecutive games, which has since been broken. The Saints dealt Abramowicz to the San Francisco 49ers after the second game of the 1973 season for draft choices. After an adjustment period, he became a 49ers' starter the last 11 games, catching 35 passes for 442 yards and a TD. He retired after the 1974 season, a campaign in which he grabbed 25 passes for San Francisco. Abramowicz put up some lofty numbers during his eight-year NFL career. He caught 369 passes for 5,686 yards and 39 TDs in 111 games.

Doug Swearingen (Athlete - 1970s)



Doug Swearingen (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1979). He was best known for his pitching prowess, but Swearingen was a multi-sport standout for the Purple Riders.

In addition to the diamond, Swearingen sparkled on the gridiron as well as the hardwood for Ferry. With that said, Swearingen remains one of the finest hurlers in Ohio Valley prep annals.

The crafty southpaw was a four-year baseball letterman for the Purple Riders. When not on the hill, Swearingen was a hard-hitting outfielder.

He was a two-time all-Valley honoree and was a first-team all-Ohio selection as a senior. There was no all-OVAC team back then.

Swearingen went 6-2 a senior, compiling a miniscule 0.74 ERA. He fanned 130 batters in 62 innings. He was equally as potent at the plate, batting a robust .412 with eight doubles, three triples, one homer and 24 RBI. He lost the ultimate heartbreaker that spring, dropping a 1-0, 10-inning district final affair to Cadiz. He struck out 20 in a route-going effort.

Such an outstanding prep career had college baseball coaches coveting the 6 ft. 2, 195-pound southpaw. He chose The Ohio State University, a decision he would not regret. Swearingen was a four-year lettermen for the Buckeyes. He compiled a sparkling 23-13 career mark with a 3.80 ERA. Swearingen was a superb 9-1 as a junior, losing only to Oklahoma in the NCAA Regional. He was second-team all-Big Ten that season. Swearingen finished his Scarlet & Gray career tied for 14th place for career mound wins, ninth in innings pitched (278) and 13th in strikeouts (224). He was the team's co-captain as a senior.

He was drafted by the Seattle Mariners in the 23rd round. He pitched for four years in the minors, going 30-22 with a 3.36 ERA. Swearingen was also a member of the 1982 U.S. National Team which participated in South Korea. He posted a 3-1 record with a 2.25 ERA as the U.S. claimed the bronze medal.

A two-year in football and basketball letterman, he was a first-team all-OVAC defensive back as a senior and was chosen to play in the OVAC All-Star Football Game, but he opted to bypass the game due to his Ohio State baseball scholarship.

Chris Starr (Athlete - 1980s)



Chris Starr (Buckeye Trail High School, Class of 1986). You name the sport and this former Warrior shined en route to earning 12 varsity letters and eventually a scholarship to Michigan.

While football and basketball were priorities for Starr, baseball was where he made his greatest impact.

Starr was a standout on the hill for the Warriors and earned first-team all-Ohio Class A, first-team all-Eastern District and first-team all-OVAC. He also played in the Ohio North-South All-Star Series.

During the summer months, Starr was a key contributor for the Maynard Post 666 American Legion squad which won two state titles and played in the American Legion World Series in 1986.

Starr earned a full baseball scholarship to play for the Wolverines in baseball. He played two seasons in Ann Arbor, winning a Big 10 championship in 1987. Due to injury, Starr eventually transferred to Muskingum College where he pitched for two years, earning all-Ohio Athletic Conference honors. He had 125 strikeouts in his two seasons with an ERA of 2.81 and was named a pre-season all-American, but tore his ACL in the first game of the season.

Continuing to overcome adversity, Starr was drafted in the 16th round of the Major League Baseball Draft by the Texas Rangers in 1991. He played three seasons of professional baseball.

On the football field, Starr etched his name into Buckeye Trail history as the school's all-time leader in passing and rushing yards. He was an honorable mention all-Ohio pick, first-team all-OVAC and first-team all-Eastern District. He was chosen to play in the OVAC All-Star Football Game, but turned it down due to Legion baseball.

During basketball season, Starr also earned all-state accolades. He was named to the third-team as well as first-team all-OVAC and all-District 12 squads. All told, he scored 770 points, averaging 12 points a game. He grabbed 367 rebounds, passed out 154 assists and shot 45 percent from the field.

Joe Maroon (Athlete - 1950s)



Joe Maroon (St. John Central High School, Class of 1958). A four-year Irish letterman in football, basketball and baseball, he became the first St. John's gridder to earn first team All-Ohio football honors (as a defensive safety) and also was an All-Ohio baseball selection. A two-time All-OVAC and All-Valley football honoree, he was co-captain of the 1957 All-OV 'Big School' honor roll as a 5-foot-6, 150-pound two-way back. After earning second team All-OVAC honors as a sophomore, he helped the Irish record the school's first-ever perfect football season of 9-0 with an OVAC title as a junior under Coach Hen Healy in 1956. Then he posted major statistics in only seven games (6-1 record) in a senior season shortened by influenza.

As a senior, Maroon led the Irish in scoring and rushing in the seven-game season. He led Eastern Ohio with 107 points on 17 touchdowns and five conversion runs and also completed 16 of 35 passes for eight scores. He had eight TD runs between 50-80 yards; returned four kicks for TDs with a long of 78 yards; and had four-TD games against Wheeling Central, Mingo and Barnesville. On defense, he intercepted five passes and also punted.

A three-sport Irish team co-captain, he also was selected captain of the winning Ohio team in the annual Ohio-W. Va. All-Star game. He also was awarded the Coca-Cola Scholar-Athlete Award by the OVAC.

Maroon attended Indiana University on a football scholarship and earned Academic All-America honors. He was a starting halfback in 1960 and averaged 5.3 yards a carry.

After receiving a medical degree from Indiana, he trained at Georgetown University and at Oxford University in England. Currently Vice-Chairman and Professor of Neurosurgery at the University of Pittsburgh, he is also the Team Neurosurgeon for the Pittsburgh Steelers. He also participates in numerous marathon races and triathlons. He was the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Man of the Year in 1987.

Richard 'Dick' Kerwood (Athlete - 1960s)



Richard "Dick" Kerwood (Bishop Donahue High School, Class of 1968). Some would have viewed it as a handicap; Kerwood used it as motivation.

The Bishop Donahue star was born June 9, 1950 with just one arm. It never hindered him in life or athletics.

During his youth, he played basketball and baseball, excelling in both. He was also a pioneer in weightlifting. He bought a cast iron set of weights while in grade school and used it passionately. The visionary strength training paid handsome dividends.

As a freshman at Bishop Donahue, Kerwood played football, basketball and baseball for Coach Tom O'Connell, lettering in all three sports.

During the next three years at the McMechen-based school, he opted to concentrate on just football and basketball. It proved a prudent decision.

The powerful 6 ft. 2, 190-pounder started on the gridiron his final three seasons as a center, middle linebacker and kicker.

During that time, he was accorded all-Valley, all-OVAC and all-State honors, named captain of the first two all-star squads.

Kerwood distinguished himself so much as a senior gridder that he earned honorable mention All-American plaudits. He was also invited to play in the OVAC All-Star Football Game.

His basketball career with the Bishops also took on all-star status. Kerwood was the team's center and gained all-OVAC and all-Valley honors. He was accorded the Sportsmanship Trophy at the West Virginia State Basketball Tournament as a senior.

Kerwood's sparkling prep play afforded him several college scholarship offers in both football and basketball. He opted to play football at Salem College, earning extensive playing time as a freshman.

As fate would have it, Kerwood was tragically killed in an automobile accident shortly after his frosh grid season at Salem.

Alex Welker (Athlete - 1970s)



Alex Welker (The Linsly School, Class of 1977). He is the Michael Phelps of Ohio Valley swimmers.

Welker splashed his way to a career like none other in OVAC swimming annals. Simply put, Welker was unbeatable.

The Linsly star never lost a race in high school, including relays, so it is only fitting that he is the first swimmer to be inducted into the OVAC Hall of Fame.

He entered Linsly as a sophomore and quickly established himself as an aquatic star. An exclamation point to his unblemished record was that he held an OVAC record in every event he competed in. He competed without ever shaving his body or tapering, methods use to lower resistance, yielding faster times.

Welker still holds school and OVAC records dating back to 1976. He earned the distinction of being named All-American as both a junior and senior.

His unparalleled swimming career proved a springboard to a scholarship from The Ohio State University, and Welker found more pool success in Columbus.

He was voted the Buckeyes' Freshman Swimmer of the Year, helping the Scarlet & Gray to a runner-up finish in the Big Ten. He was a two-time NCAA qualifier while establishing five Ohio State records.

Welker, unfortunately, suffered a major shoulder injury during his sophomore season, and many thought his swimming career was over. He proved the naysayers wrong as he earned "Comeback of the Year Award" while also setting a new Ohio State record in the 200-meter freestyle as a senior.

He also set numerous records during his earlier years in AAU competition.

He also earned a piece of a world record. In 1975, he was a member of a 10-swimmer team that established a world mark in the 50-mile relay in Mount Vernon, Ohio, with Welker posting the fastest split.

Shawn Vincent (Athlete - 1980s)



Shawn Vincent (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 1987). Football was the name of the game for this Red Devils' icon.

You name the way to be involved in a football game and Vincent was the leader of a team that advanced to the OHSAA Division III state semifinals before falling to Chagrin Falls Kenston, 22-21.

Vincent triggered the Red Devils' attack at the quarterback spot, setting an Ohio Valley record for rushing yards from the position at 1,360 yards in 13 games. He also scored 150 points for a Red Devil squad which won the OVAC Class 3-A title. During the regular season, Vincent averaged 10.1 yards a carry and scored 20 touchdowns.

Vincent passed for 441 yards and four touchdowns during his senior campaign. All told, he scored 24 touchdowns. He was also a weapon as a punt and kick returner, accumulating 638 yards and three scores. On the defensive side of the ball, Vincent roamed in the secondary and had seven interceptions.

For his season, Vincent was an all-OVAC, all-Ohio and all-Valley selection.

Upon his graduation, he accepted a scholarship to play defensive back at the University of Akron. He started for the Zips for three seasons and in 1988 shared the top sophomore award. He still holds the school record with 265 interception return yards and his 13 career interceptions rank second in the Akron record book.

Vincent then signed a free-agent contract with the Pittsburgh Steelers, playing 10 games in 1991 and recording two interceptions.

Aside from his football prowess, Vincent lettered in basketball and track and field for the Red Devils. He was the track most valuable athlete and still holds the school long-jump record.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Amber Ellison (Athlete - 1990s)



Amber Ellison (Meadowbrook High School, Class of 1999) . The Lady Colts' basketball program is one of the most storied in the Ohio Valley and Ellison is a major reason why.

Ellison was a four-year letterwinner for the Lady Colts, twice earning first-team all-Ohio accolades en route to her honors and eventual basketball scholarship to Wheeling Jesuit University,

She's currently Meadowbrook's second all-time girls' leader in points (1,363) and rebounds (850) and the all-time leader in steals (506) and assists (472). Ellison also holds the Meadowbrook single-game record for 44 points, which she netted as a senior against John Marshall.

During that senior season, Ellison averaged 24.1 points and 14.6 rebounds per game en route to every first-team award imaginable. She was first-team all-Ohio in Division II, Eastern District Player of the Year; All-District 12; Player of the year in the East Central Ohio League and first-team all-OVAC. She was also chosen for the Ohio North-South and OVAC All-Star games.

As a junior, Ellison poured in 19 points, grabbed 10 rebounds, passed out 5.7 assists and snared 5.5 steals per game en route to first-team all-everything. She was also named honorable mention all-USA Today.

If basketball wasn't enough, Ellison is also one of the finest softball players to ever wear a Lady Colts' uniform. She batted better than .400 every year of her career. Ellison was a three-time all-Ohio softball selection and four-time all-district pick. She was player of the year, as a sophomore, in the ECOL after batting .506 with seven home runs, seven triples and 37 RBI.

At Wheeling Jesuit, Ellison scored 1,273 career pints, grabbed 521 rebounds, passed out 389 assists and made 218 steals and blocked 42 shots. A four-year letterwinner, she was a two-year captain for the Lady Cardinals and was twice named to the all-WVIAC squad.

After her playing career at Jesuit, Ellison accepted a coaching position at Shenandoah where she served as an assistant for a season before ascending to the head coaching job. She was with the Lady Zeps for three seasons, posting a 54-17 record while reaching three district tournaments. She also had brief coaching stints at Franklin Heights and Olentangy Orange.

Kenny Howell (Athlete - 2000s)



Kenny Howell (St. John Central High School, Class of 2000). It didn't matter the season or the sport for this former Irish standout.

However, it was in track and field where Howell made his greatest impact despite only participating in the sport for three years because he played baseball as a freshman.

After being encouraged to give track and field a try, Howell became the area's most decorated male thrower, shining in the discus and shot put.

Howell was a three-time all-Ohioan in the discus. He placed third in the state his first season in the circle and then captured the coveted Division III state championship in 1999. As a senior, Howell was undefeated until the state meet when he settled for silver despite a personal-best throw of 180 feet. That mark still stands as the best in Ohio Valley history. Along with his efforts in the state competition, Howell was a three-time OVAC Champion in the platter event.

Howell placed fifth in the state shot put competition as a senior and was a two-time OVAC champion in the iron-ball event.

Howell also ran on high quality sprint relay teams for the Irish.

On the football field, Howell etched his name into St. John Central history as a three-year starter for squads which combined for a 25-6 record and qualified for the playoffs in 1999 after a 9-1 season.

Howell was the primary running back for the Irish, amassing 1,500 yards as a junior en route to second-team all-Ohio status. He was first-team all-stater as a senior when he ran for better than 1,300 yards and was twice named to the OVAC's first team.

Howell was also a three-year starter for the Irish basketball program.

After high school, Howell accepted a track scholarship to West Virginia University, but eventually transferred to The Ohio State University where he completed his career and degree. He now resides in Columbus and works in the construction business.

Thomas E. Rataiczak (OVAC Family)



Thomas E. Rataiczak (Bellaire High School, Class of 1964). Succeeding the late Sam Mumley and his friend-to-all, get-it-done attitude as the guiding force of the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference would not be an easy task, but it's one that Rataiczak has done with tremendous vision and class… and then some.

"Rat" has been the de facto head of the OVAC as Executive Secretary since 1999, and under his leadership, the bi-state conference has grown to an all-time high of 50 member schools from Ohio and West Virginia.

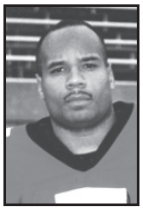
During Rataiczak's watch, the Conference has grown by leaps and bounds in a variety of areas. Among them have been the formation of the OVAC Hall of Fame and the OVAC Sports Museum (both located in WesBanco Arena in Wheeling); instituting boys' and girls' basketball tournaments and expanding many of the other events, most notably the revised format of the track championships; creating an All-Conference Academic Team in conjunction with Ohio University Eastern; the creation of an official OVAC website; standardizing all championship awards; developing a meet director's handbook; computerizing all financial accounts; providing countless SportsWorld speakers to the area for more than 600 school assemblies, raising more than $250,000 to bring them in at no cost to the Conference; and placing the Conference on solid financial ground through a partnership with Scholastic Sports Marketing.

A retired Bellaire High School teacher, he served as a "Founding Father" and Director of the BHS Sports Foundation and has been chairman of the Bellaire Wall of Fame/Hall of Fame Committee for more than 20 years. Rataiczak has been the Big Reds' basketball scorekeeper for 43 years, working at more than 1,700 consecutive varsity and junior varsity games. In fact, the OVAC's Scorekeeper/Timer Award presented annually at the OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic is named in his honor.

He has also served more than 30 years as the BHS record-keeper, publishing extensive media guides for both football and basketball.

The recipient of the Bellaire Alumni Association's Outstanding Alumnus Award in 1992, he graduated from West Liberty State College and obtained a master's degree from West Virginia University. He received the Robert S. McKelvey Award from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club in 2010 and his most recent undertaking was being elected to the Bellaire Board of Education in 2012.

Denver Williams (Athlete - 1990s)



Denver Williams (Cadiz High School, Class of 1996). When it comes to speed, there have been very few, if any, faster than Williams.

Regardless if it was on the track or on the football field, Williams was consistently running away from the opposition.

Williams was a four-year regular in both track and football for the Cardinals. On the oval, Williams wrote his name into Ohio Valley history in both the 100-meter and 200-meter dashes.

He wasted little time in making a name for himself. He won the Division III state 200-meter dash title as a freshman in 1993. He proceeded to win three more, making him one of just five athletes in state history to win the same event four straight years.

Williams didn't stop with the 200 titles. He added the Division III 100-meter crowns to his resume in both his junior and senior seasons. Williams ran his personal-best times of 10.55 and 21.50 to win the gold medals as a senior, and both still stand as all-time OHSAA and Ohio Valley records.

On the football field, Williams also sparkled, earning first-team all-Ohio and all-Eastern District twice. He owns the Cadiz school record for career rushing yards with 4,479.

After his prep career, Williams accepted a football scholarship to the University of Kentucky where he also ran track. He red-shirted as a freshman and then transferred to Youngstown State where he helped the Penguins win the NCAA Division I-AA National Championship. All told, he lettered four years at YSU in football and three in track.

For the Penguins' track team, Williams was the 200-meter runner-up in the Mid-Continent Conference and was apart of school records in the indoor 4x400 and sprint medley.

Williams has now entered the coaching field. He's spent time at Ashland, Ohio Northern and Heidelberg. Currently, he's working as a football coach and track coach at Trinity College in Hartford, Conn.

Class of 2013

OVAC Hall of Fame

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Tim McCoy (OVAC Contributor)



Tim McCoy (Jefferson Union High School, Class of 1978). For a quarter of a century, McCoy has taken the lead role in expanding broadcast and internet coverage of Ohio Valley high school sports, specifically those of the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference.

Those efforts have helped give thousands of area high school athletes tremendous exposure, with countless thousands of viewers able to watch the valley's best perform in the athletic realm.

Among the many highlights has been live TV coverage of various all-star contests, most notably the Rudy Mumley OVAC All-Star Charity Football Classic from Wheeling Island Stadium and the Ron Mauck OVAC Wrestling Championships from WesBanco Arena in Wheeling. At one time, WTOV-TV9 also aired the Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic.

Other events include the football "Game of the Week" broadcasts (replays of area games following the comprehensive "Sports Friday" shows) ; in-depth pre-season football team previews and the "Big 22" awards banquet in December. WTOV-TV9 also has an extensive internet football supersite available.

McCoy became Vice-President and General Manager of WTOV-TV9 in 1994. Prior to that, he served as the station's Operations Manager for six years

He began his career in television as a Production Technician at WNEO-TV in Kent from 1979-82. He first joined WTOV as a Promotion Producer from 1982-85 and then spent two years at NBC affiliate WLEX-TV in Lexington, Kentucky as Promotions and Creative Services Director where he received two ADDY awards.

He has served on various boards in the Ohio Valley, including as president and campaign chairman of the United Way of Jefferson County, the St. John Arena, the Steubenville Rotary and the Steubenville City of Murals, He is also a member of The Friends of Wheeling, the Eastern Ohio Valley Tech Prep Consortium, Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce, the Wheeling Area Chamber of Commerce, Franciscan University of Steubenville, Historic Fort Steuben and the Jefferson County WIND Team. He was named 1995 City of Murals "Volunteer of the Year"; the Community Leadership Award from the Franciscan University of Steubenville; a Community Award from the Steubenville branch of the NAACP; and the One in a Million Award from the Steubenville Million Man March Committee.awards.

He was the 1997 Robert S. McKelvey Memorial Award recipient from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Richard 'Hoot' Gibson (Media)



Richard "Hoot" Gibson (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 1970). He began his career in the local media in 1981 and has spent 32 years on the staff at The Times Leader, serving as a sports writer and for a brief time as Sports Editor and also as Area News Editor.

Gibson has written countless columns covering high school, college and professional sports and instituted the All-Times Leader teams in all high school sports.

He has covered OVAC contests in nearly every sport and at most conference schools over the years, including OVAC All-Star games in every sport.

Gibson has been seen at countless sporting events not only locally, but around the country. He's covered several NCAA men's basketball "Final Four" games, many World Series and MLB All-Star Games, 10 Super Bowls and 18 college football bowl games. He's also authored countless stories on the Ohio State Buckeyes and the West Virginia Mountaineers and served one year as the beat writer for the Pittsburgh Pirates.

He received the OHSAA Media Service Award for the Eastern District in 2000 and has won several Ohio Prep Sports Writers Association awards over the years.

Gibson was also a freelance writer for several years for Basketball Weekly magazine based out of Detroit, Michigan.

Gibson, who attended Harding University in Arkansas, also spent several years as a local baseball, basketball and volleyball official and served as manager of the Fairpoint-Neffs ball-club of the Ohio Valley Baseball League.

He served three years in the United States Navy (1976-78), working in communications for Command 6th Fleet Europe while stationed in Italy and touring both Europe and northern Africa.

Jim Thomas (Coaches)



Jim Thomas (Wheeling Central Catholic High School, Class of 1963).

The highly-regarded "JT" is the fourth-winningest coach in Ohio Valley history behind Reno Saccoccia, Jay Circosta and the fellow Hall of Famer George Strager with a 35-year record of 235-134-2. He wound up only 35 wins off of the all-time West Virginia state record for football coaching victories (267).

His first head coaching stint came at old Yorkville High where he spent three years (1968-70), guiding the Ductillites to an unbeaten season in 1970.

He then assumed the head coaching position as Wheeling Central (1971-80), and moved on to Wheeling Park for six seasons (1981-86). From there, it was back to his alma mater for a second stint, this time guiding the Maroon Knights from 1987-2004.

He coached teams to seven Ohio Valley Athletic Conference championships (1974, 1976, 1978, 1979, 1990, 2000 and 2004) and four West Virginia state title. The Maroon Knights were Class AA state champs at the first "Super Six" event in Charleston in 1979 and they won the Class A crown in 2000, 2002 and 2004. The 2000 team set a school record for wins (13-1).

He also coached the West Virginia squad four times in the Rudy Mumley OVAC Charity All-Star Football Classic.

Thomas was voted the West Virginia All-Sport "Coach of the Year" for 2004-05 and the OVAC All-Sport "Coach of the Year" in both 1980 and 2003. He was also The Intelligencer's "Coach of the Year" in 1979 and the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan "Man of the Year" in 2001.

He earned his bachelor's degree from West Liberty State College and a master's degree from West Virginia University.

Thomas passed away in 2005 at the age of 60.

Don Zinni (Officials)



Don Zinni (Yorkville High School, Class of 1954). He began his officiating career in 1970 as a member of the Ohio Valley Board of Football Officials, remaining active until 1991.

He officiated at the district, regional and state level in the WVSSAC playoffs from 1975-90, working the 1977 Class AAA State Championship Game.; and he worked games at the regional and state semifinal level in the OHSAA during that same time span.

Zinni officiated the Rudy Mumley OVAC All-Star Charity Football Classic four times (three as referee and one as back judge) and worked the OHSFCA North-South All-Star Classic in Massillon in 1982.

A member of the OHSAA Football Advisory Committee for four years and a Past President and Rules Interpreter of the Ohio Valley Board of Football Officials, Zinni became OVAC Football Commissioner in 1995 and held that position until retiring in 2012 as the longest-tenured individual to serve in that capacity..

While serving as OVAC Football Commissioner, the affable Zinni expanded officiating crews from four men to five; expanded the officiating base to include several areas on both sides of the river including Wheeling, Weirton-Steubenville, Mason-Dixon, Parkersburg-Marietta, Columbiana County, Cambridge-Zanesville and Columbus; established rating of crews by coaches during the season and by the Commissioner after the season; served as a clearinghouse for schools seeking opponents for schedule openings; and assigned officials to the Rudy Mumley OVAC All-Star Charity Football Classic by position rating.

Zinni also spent several years in the coaching ranks. He first served as junior high and freshman basketball coach from 1958-65; was an assistant football coach at Yorkville High from 1959-65; was the head coach at Yorkville from 1965-70; and then was the high school principal from 1970-72.

He is also a member of the OVAC Hall of Fame Committee.

As a high school athlete, Zinni was a four-year letterman in baseball, a two-year letterman in football and a one-year letterman in basketball at Yorkville.

Nick Aloi (Coaches)



Nick Aloi (Midland (Pa.) High School, Class of 1962). His coaching career began with a three-year stint at his alma mater, Midland (Pa.) Lincoln High, where he led the team to a state runner-up finish in 1986. He was named Class A "Coach of the Year" in western Pennsylvania in 1985.

Aloi's coaching stay at East Liverpool began in 1986 and spanned 20 years, longer than any basketball coach in school history. He compiled a career record of 326-121, an impressive winning percentage of 73%.

His Potter-coached teams won four Ohio Valley Athletic Conference championships (1991, '94, '95 and '99); nine sectional titles; six district crowns and one regional championship with an OHSAA State "Final Four" Appearance in 1999. The '99 team finished with a 23-2 record, falling to Shaker Heights (71-63) in the Division I state semifinals.

He was selected Ohio Division I "Coach of the Year" in 1996 by the Ohio High School Basketball Association and 1999 by The Associated Press; was the District 5 Basketball Coaches Association "Coach of the Year" 11 times, Eastern District "Coach of the Year" seven times and received similar honors in Columbiana County numerous times.

He was previously inducted into the East Liverpool High School Athletic Hall of Fame, the Beaver County Sports Hall of Fame, the Midland High School Sports Hall of Fame and the District 5 Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

Among Aloi's attributes were consistency, continuity and commitment, evident in the fact that he never missed an open gym, practice, scrimmage or game during his playing or coaching careers. He also started the popular "Potter Holiday Classic," a tournament known for quality competition, and conducted the "Little Potters Clinic" yearly for the district's elementary and middle school students free of charge.

As an athlete, Aloi was the leading scorer, MVP and team captain of Midland's 1962 undefeated basketball team, earning All-WPIAL and All-State recognition. He then went to Bowling Green State University where he was a three-year starter and team co-captain, averaging 15 points per game. Aloi earned his bachelor's degree from Bowling Green and later obtained his master's degree from Duquesne University. He was drafted by the St. Louis Hawks of the NBA.

John Howell (Officials)



John Howell (Lancaster Fairfield Union High School, Class of 1967). When it comes to high school basketball officials, Howell is among the most recognized individuals throughout the Ohio Valley. After all, during a 38-year officiating career, he worked in practically every gymnasium out there.

Howell became a member of the Ohio Valley Board of Approved Basketball Officials in 1972. He served as secretary of the board for 14 years; as a training class instructor for 14 years; as rules interpreter for 16 years and assigned junior varsity officials for 14 years.

He served as the OVAC's Assistant Basketball Commissioner from 1983-94 and became the Basketball Commissioner in 1995, a role he still has today.

Howell worked his first varsity basketball game in 1974 (Paden City vs. St. Marys) and his final appearance on the hardwood came March 11, 2009 in a West Virginia Class AA Regional game at Phillip Barbour High School.

Howell worked a total of 27 state tournaments: 14 Ohio boys (1987, '88, '90, '92, '94, '95, '96, '98, '99, 2000, '02, '04, '06,' 08); 5 Ohio girls (90, 91, 93, 01, 03); 6 West Virginia boys (88, 91, 94, 97, 99, 03); and 2 West Virginia girls (83, 89). He also worked a total of 75 regional tournament games over the years.

In 1993, Howell worked a W. Va. boys' state semifinal game in Charleston with Mike Coyne in morning and then and Ohio girls' semifinal game in Columbus with Roger Levi later same day. He officiated the first three-man championship boys' game in Ohio in 1996 and the first 3-man championship boys' game in W. Va. in 1997.

Howell received a host of awards over the years, including NFIOA (National Federation of Interscholastic Officials Association) Official of the Year in West Virginia in 1992 and in Ohio in 1997; Ohio District 5 Official of the Year in 1991. Ohio District 12 Official of the Year in 1992; West Virginia Official of the Year in 1994 and was the 2013 recipient of the OVAC's Robert Dawson Officials' Award. He was inducted into the OHSAA Officials Hall of Fame in 2003.

In addition to basketball, Howell has worked as a track official since 1972, serving in various capacities over the years at OVAC meets as well as at the Bellaire Relays and Shadyside Relays, and he has handled the position of clerk at those meets for the last 15 years.

While not an on-field official in football, Howell served as the OVAC's Assistant Football Commissioner under Hall of Famer Evan Reese from 1983-94.

Harry 'Moo' Moore (Athlete - 1940s)



Harry "Moo" Moore (Moundsville High School, Class of 1948). The 6-foot-2 forward set school career scoring records which lasted 18 years until broken in 1966 by OVAC Hall of Famer Bob Hummell. He scored 1,700 career points in four seasons and he also set the all-time Trojan single-game record of 54 points, including 25 goals, in a 101-17 rout of Cameron.

He earned first team, one-class All-State as a senior and was twice a first team All-OVAC largest Class AA honoree. He also was the first state High School Player of the Year honoree in selections made from 1948-60 by the Tri-State Independent Tournament held in Sistersville.

Moore led the Trojans to records of 15-2 in 1948 and 19-3 in 1946 when the team advanced to the W.Va. region finals.

He earned a scholarship to West Virginia University where he played on three varsity teams with a combined 60-20 record, including a Southern Conference regular season and tournament championship. Moore's 84 percent career free throw percentage ranks No. 2 all-time at WVU. He averaged 12.8 points a game as a senior and was selected honorable mention All-America.

He also was chosen in the sixth round of the 1952 NBA Draft by the Syracuse Nationals. He served in the Army infantry from 1953-55 and was selected to play in the 1954 armed forces Pan-American Games in Mexico and International Games in Germany. In 2007, he was inducted into the West Virginia University Sports Hall of Fame.

Moore, who retired in 1995 from the oil industry, resides in Moundsville.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Ron 'Cy' Godfrey (Athlete - 1950s)



Ron "Cy" Godfrey (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1956). The 6-foot-5 stringbean set school scoring records which remain on the books for more than 50 years. He shattered Purple Rider career, season and single game marks set in 1944 by legendary OVAC Hall of Famer Alex Groza. His records include current standards of 1,300 career points, a 32.4 point per game norm as a senior, and twice scoring 51 points in a game against Wheeling and Benwood Union. The single-game mark has been tied, the others unbroken. He earned All-Ohio and All-OVAC honors in 1956 at the Purple Riders went 18-6 with sectional and district titles before bowing to Canton McKinley, 57-54, in regional play.

He earned a scholarship to the University of Miami, where he scored 1,384 career points as the Hurricanes went 61-18 in his three varsity seasons. The 1960 NCAA Tournament team went 23-4 and the 1961 NIT Tournament squad ended 20-7 as Godfrey earned honorable mention All-America.

He later served as head coach for four seasons of the Hurricanes before resigning in 1971. His prize protégé was future Basketball Hall of Famer Rick Barry. Godfrey has been inducted into the University of Miami Sports Hall of Fame and the Atlantic Coast Conference Legends Class of 2012 although he never played an ACC game. Miami is currently a member of the ACC. Godfrey resides in Coral Springs, Fla.

Ken Vargo (Athlete - 1950s)



Ken Vargo (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1952). A three-sport, four-year Purple Rider athlete who was team captain in football and basketball as a senior and a track team member. A 6-foot, 184-pound center-linebacker in football, he earned first team Associated Press All-Ohio defense as a senior and was selected captain of the All-OVAC and All-Valley "Big School" honor rolls. The 1951 All-Valley selections were the first ones selecting Big and Small School teams. Vargo, a 48-minute player, also was a two-time All-Eastern Ohio selection at center.

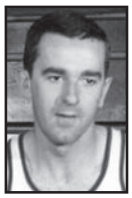
He earned a scholarship to Ohio State University where he became a three-year regular at center and Buckeye co-captain as a senior when he earned first team All-Big Ten Conference with two teammates in the College Football Hall of Fame - Heisman Trophy winner Howard (Hopalong) Cassaday and Outland Trophy winner Jim Parker. Vargo played in the 1956 Hula Bowl.

As a junior, he was a regular on a 10-0 record team which won the Rose Bowl, 20-7, over USC and was named the AP National Champions.

Vargo was drafted in the ninth round by the Chicago Bears of the National Football League, but opted to play in Canada with the Ottawa Rough Riders where he was Canadian Football League All-Star linebacker in his 1956 rookie season.

After his playing career, he remained in Canada and resides in Ottawa.

Jim Brown (Athlete - 1960s)



Jim Brown (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1961). A two-sport Purple Rider standout, he is the first OVAC athlete honored primarily for golf. In the OVAC all-class tournament, he improved each year to place fourth, third, second and first his four years. He also won three OVAC Ohio-side titles. He won three Ohio district crowns after placing second as a freshman. In the Ohio state tournament, he improved each season - 11th, 8th, 6th and 4th as a senior. His career match record was 43-4, including 13-1 as a senior after marks of 9-2, 11-0 and 10-1. He was medalist in 39 of 47 career matches.

In basketball, the 5-foot-11 guard was a two-time All-OVAC Class AAA choice, twice All-Eastern Ohio (co-captain as senior) and All-Ohio second and third team in two wire service selections. He was co-captain in the Ohio Norrth-South All-Star Game.

He earned a scholarship to play golf and basketball at Ohio State and became OSU's No.1 golfer, and senior team captain, and a three-year varsity basketball letterman.

After six years coaching at Rollins College in Florida and Kent State, he returned in 1973 to become Ohio State's ninth golf coach. He remained for 36 seasons as the longest tenured coach in any sport at OSU. His teams won 17 Big Ten titles and the 1979 NCAA championship among 11 NCAA Top 10 finishes and 31 appearances. A three-time Big Ten Coach of the Year, he won national honors in 1979 and 1986. He has been inducted into the Golf Coaches of America Hall of Fame and the Ohio State Athletics Hall of Fame. Brown splits retirement time between Columbus and Florida.

Larry Marmie (Athlete - 1960s)



Larry Marmie (Barnesville High School, Class of 1960).An All-Ohio quarterback for the Shamrocks, he also earned All-OVAC honors in football and All-Eastern Ohio honors in basketball and football as a senior. He also was selected All-Valley "Small School" first team quarterback.

Playing for coach Bob (Smokey) Wion on a 7-2 record team as a senior in 1959, Marmie was selected to the UPI All-Ohio Class AA team and played in the 1960 Ohio-West Virginia All-Star game. The 1959 Shamrocks averaged 30.4 points a game with Marmie rushing for 626 yards and passing for 566 yards in a balanced attack.

In 1960, he walked on at Ohio State University and was a member of the freshman team before transferring for his final three years at Eastern Kentucky University. A four-year starter at quarterback, he was team captain and MVP as a senior and set seven school records.

After five college assistant coaching jobs, he joined Arizona State as defensive coordinator in 1985 and became head coach for four years from 1988-91. After stops at Tennessee and UCLA, he joined the professional coaching ranks from 1996-2003 with the Arizona Cardinals. He then joined the St. Louis Rams (2004-05) and Seattle Seahawks (2006-09). Last season was his 47th year in coaching.

He currently resides in California.

Rhonda Noble (Athlete - 1970s)



Rhonda Noble (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 1979). She was one of the first three-sport female athletes in Ohio Valley annals. She was also one of the best.

Noble not only starred in volleyball, basketball and softball for the Lady Red Devils, but she was also just as impressive in the realm of academics. Noble's many talents helped elevate the Lady Red Devils to team success.

As a senior, she led St. C.'s volleyball team to the regional tournament. It was a milestone achievement as it marked the first time an Eastern Ohio team ever advanced to the Sweet 16. The Lady Red Devils were also crowned OVAC champions that season. Noble was voted the team's most valuable player that campaign, an honor she also landed as a sophomore. As dominating as she was in volleyball, Noble may have been even more-so in basketball. In leading St. C. to the OVAC championship her senior campaign, Noble landed every conceivable honor. She was voted, all-OVAC, all-District, all-Valley and all-Ohio. She was named the team's MVP and was chosen to play in the OVAC All-Star Game. In softball, she was a three-year letterwinner and was again named MVP as a senior.

Her St. C. career featured 10 athletic letters and being voted the school's female athlete of the year for 1978-79. She was also a member of the St. Clairsville National Honor Society. She was inducted into the St. Clairsville High School Athletic Hall of Fame in 2008.

After receiving her St. C. diploma, Noble went from one hilltop to another. She chose West Liberty State College to continue her athletic and academic pursuit and she was a rare three-sport performer in college. She was an impact performer early on for the Lady Hilltoppers' volleyball program. She was named all-WVIAC as a sophomore, junior and senior. She helped lead WLSC to the conference crown in 1981. All-conference honors and Noble became synonymous. She earned all-WVIAC plaudits in basketball as a senior and as a junior and senior in softball. She was inducted into the West Liberty University Hall of Fame in 2000. She returned as West Liberty's head volleyball coach from 1986-1995. During that tenure, she was twice (1987 & 1981) voted WVIAC Volleyball Coach of the Year. Noble is the chairperson of West Liberty's Department of Health & Human performance in the College of Education.

Peri Powell (Athlete - 1970s)



Peri Powell (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1979). She distinguished herself as a superb college softball player. Unfortunately for Powell, her high school did not field a prep softball team.

That didn't stop her, however, from being an exceptional athlete for the Purple Riders, lettering in three sports.

Powell still rates as one of the finest basketball players, male or female, in Martins Ferry history. She poured in 1,404 points in her prep career. In the process, the dynamite guard was accorded all-Ohio honors as a junior and senior. She was also honored as OVAC Player of the Year as a senior and was captain of the All-Valley team that same year.

Powell displayed her versatility by lettering four years in volleyball for the Ferrians while also lettering three years in track and field.

Softball came to the forefront at the next level, as Powell earned a full scholarship to the College of Steubenville. As fate would have it, the college did away with the program after two years.

Powell remained undaunted, however. She simply took her vast softball skills to West Liberty State College. It was a move that paid quick, albeit, short dividends. Powell earned first-team all WVIAC accolades in softball for the Lady Hilltoppers. She opted, however, to leave West Liberty.

It was not the end of her collegiate exploits, as she decided to ply her trade at Wheeling College (now Jesuit University). She scripted a brilliant two-year career with the Lady Cardinals.

She gained all-WVIAC honors both seasons and was named conference player of the year as a senior. She batted .437 that year. Powell played in the NAIA national tournament in San Antonio, Texas. Powell was voted NAIA All-American, the first Lady Cardinal athlete to ever gain that distinction. Wheeling College retired her softball jersey in 1987.

After her playing days, Powell distinguished herself in the coaching ranks. She served as Wheeling College head softball coach for two years, being named the WVIAC Coach of the Year, only to have the college discontinue the program. Powell currently serves as assistant softball coach at Martins Ferry.

Mark Emmerling (Athlete - 1980s)



Mark Emmerling (East Liverpool High School, Class of 1989). Wrestling and Emmerling are synonymous.

He is the unquestioned greatest grappler the Columbiana County-based school has ever produced. Moreover, he is one of the most successful in Ohio Valley Athletic Conference annals.

Emmerling reached rarified air in January of 1989. That is when the talented and gritty Potter became only the second wrestler to win four OVAC mat championships, the other being legendary Hall of Famer Bobby Douglas. Emmerling established an East Liverpool school record, chalking up 135 career wrestling victories. He also owns Potter school records for most high school tournament places (24), most pins (100) and most dual-match victories (92).

His fourth OVAC Tournament title also brought him the coveted David Bierkortte Award, emblematic as the tourney's MVP. Emmerling captured three sectional championships, three district crowns and a regional crown. His state tournament hopes were dashed by injuries as a junior and senior. His mat success was widely embraced by the East Liverpool community. He received the Lou Venditti Award as the school outstanding wrestler while also being honored by the city's mayor with "Mark Emmerling Day" on Feb. 6, 1989.

His prep prowess led him to West Virginia University where he earned two mat letters for the Mountaineers.

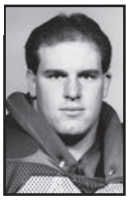
He also performed well in cross country, earning four letters for the Potters, and excelled in the classroom, being inducted in the school's National Honor Society.

OVAC Hall of Fame

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PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Blaine Rose (Athlete - 1980s)



Blaine Rose (Stanton High School, Class of 1984). In its heyday, Stanton boasted some of the premier athletes in the Ohio Valley, but none were better than Rose. He was a three-sport standout, who possessed decathlete-like talents in track while also skilled enough to earn a Division I football scholarship.

Rose could virtually do it all, whether on the gridiron, basketball court or in the track arena. When the dust settled on his success-laden prep career, Rose opted to continue his athletic and academic career at the University of Maryland, where he enjoyed a superb football career.

The 6 ft. 5, 210-pounder was Stanton's only three-sports all-Valley first-team selection. He was also selected by The Intelligencer as the 1983-84 Ohio Valley All-Sports athlete of the year.

Rose was a three-year starter in football, starring as a tight end and defensive end. He was selected as captain of the all-Valley Small School team as a senior, a season in which he collected more than 100 tackles and caught 23 passes for four touchdowns in a ground-oriented offense.

Rose used his great size and athleticism to sparkle in basketball, finishing his career with 1,052 points. He was accorded first-team all-OVAC and all-valley plaudits while being named third-team all-Ohio. He averaged 18.1. points and 14.9 rebounds that campaign as Stanton finished with a sparkling 17-4 mark.

Rose earned the rare distinction of being a three-year all-Valley track selection. He excelled as a discus thrower, pole vaulter, high jumper while lending his speed to Red Raiders' relay teams. He was a 13-foot pole vaulter which was remarkable for his size while also tossing the discus 145 feet, winning multiple OVAC titles in those events.

After picking up his Stanton diploma, Rose matriculated to Maryland, lettering four years for the Terrapins. He was the backup tight end his first two years before landing the starting spot as a junior. By the time he was a senior, Rose had blossomed into a 6 ft. 5, 260-pounder which resulted him moving to a starting guard slot. The move paid dividends as it earned him entry into the NFL. He was on the New England Patriots' taxi squad in 1990 and the Miami Dolphins' taxi squad in 1991. Rose's pro football days ended in 1992 when he played for the Orlando Thunder of the World Football League.

Ben Taylor (Athlete - 1990s)



Ben Taylor (Bellaire High School, Class of 1997). There's tough and then there's the way this Big Reds' all-Ohioan played throughout his career.

It didn't matter what side of the ball, Taylor was heavily involved in the success of the Big Reds' football program in the mid 1990s. During Taylor's career, in which he earned three letters, the Big Reds compiled a 35-3 record.

Two of those three losses came in the Ohio Division IV State Championship Game. During those seasons, Taylor saw time at linebacker, safety and wide receiver for Coach John Magistro's squad. Taylor, who was a first team all-Ohioan and a "Mr. Football" finalists as a senior, finished his career with 348 tackles and 12 interceptions on defense. He was also a mainstay in the passing game, catching 130 passes for 1,679 yards and 12 touchdowns in his career. He was also an outstanding punter. He also owns the Bellaire single-season record for receptions in a season (70) and career. His career tackle number ranks third in Bellaire history and his 192 tackles in a season ranks second. His receiving yardage is fourth. Taylor was chosen for the Ohio North-South All-Star Game and was chosen as a team captain. He also took part in the OVAC All-Star Game and captained that squad.

He landed a scholarship at Virginia Tech and shined for four years. The Hokies were 39-9 during Taylor's career in Blacksburg. En route to being named a semifinalist for the Butkus Award, which goes to the nation's premier collegiate linebacker, Taylor recorded 318 tackles and seven career sacks. He was twice named all-American and all-Big East. After finishing the regular season undefeated in 1999, Taylor and the Hokies (who had Michael Vick at quarterback) played in the Sugar Bowl for the BCS National Championship against Florida State. The Hokies lost, 46-29. Taylor was chosen for the East-West Shrine Game after the 2001 season. He was then drafted in 2002 by the Cleveland Browns in the fourth round. He spent four seasons at linebacker with the Browns and then signed with the Green Bay Packers in 2006, but injuries ended his professional playing career. All told, he recorded 218 career tackles in the NFL and had one interception.

Along with Taylor's football abilities, he was a member of two OVAC Championship basketball teams coached by OVAC Hall of Famer Gene Ammirante. The 1997 Big Reds' hoop squad won the district title. Taylor also played baseball early in his prep career and then ran track as a sprinter.

Taylor was inducted to the Bellaire High School Hall of Fame in 2005.

OVAC Hall of Fame

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Sylvia Crawley (Athlete - 1990s)



Sylvia Crawley (Steubenville High School, Class of 1990). Utilizing her 6 ft. 4 frame, there wasn't much this Big Red product couldn't do on a basketball floor. Playing primarily at center, Crawley developed into one of the best post players Steubenville and the Ohio Valley has ever seen. A three-year letterwinner, Crawley enjoyed her finest campaign as a senior when she averaged 17.9 points a game and led the Ohio Valley with 19.4 rebounds and an astounding 7.3 blocked shots. Crawley, who also lettered in track and field, ended her prep career with 978 points, 966 rebounds and 358 blocked shots.

For her efforts, Crawley was twice named to the all-OVAC Class AAA first team and she captained the Ohio-side all-Valley squad as a senior after earning second team honors as a junior.

While scoring, rebounding and blocking shots at will, the recruiting picked up steam for Crawley, who received offers from North Carolina State, Indiana, Texas A&M, Minnesota and numerous others, but she settled on the University of North Carolina. For the Tar Heels, Crawley scored 1,158 points, grabbed 582 rebounds and blocked 123 shots, while starting 101 career games. Her crowning achievement, however, came as a senior when she was named team captain and helped lead UNC to a 33-2 record and the NCAA National Championship. Crawley averaged 13.6 points and 5.2 rebounds per game that season. Crawley was named ACC Defensive Player of the Year three times. She was an alternate for the U.S. Olympic Team in 1996 and played on the national team for the 1999 U.S. Pan-Am Games and in the World University Games. North Carolina retired Crawley's number (00) and it's just one of 11 jerseys to hang from the rafters in Carmichael Arena.

Crawley's hoop career continued professionally. She played 12 seasons in 16 different countries. She played in the now defunct ABL for five years and then after playing in Europe, she played three seasons in the WNBA. During her time with the Portland Power in the ABL, Crawley won a slam dunk contest with a blind-folded dunk. After he playing career, Crawley got into coaching. She served as an assistant at UNC and Fordham before being hired as the head coach at Ohio University. She held that post for two seasons and then accepted the Boston College job, resigning in March of 2012 citing health reasons.

Bethany Piccolini (Athlete - 2000s)



Bethany Piccolini (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 2001). It didn't matter the sport, this Lady Red Devils' product shined. A mainstay in basketball and a state champion in track and field, it was in volleyball where Piccolini really left her mark on the Lady Red Devils' athletic program.

Piccolini was a four-year letterwinner for the Lady Red Devils, earning the team's Most Valuable Player honor both as a junior and senior. Leading the Lady Devils in nearly every statistical category, Piccolini was named first-team all-Ohio as a senior. On top of the honor, Piccolini was named the District 12 Player of the Year and was a first team all-OVAC selection. She also captained the inaugural all-Times Leader team as a senior. As a junior, Piccolini earned first-team District 12, all-OVAC first team and honorable mention all-Ohio.

Her prowess in volleyball earned her a scholarship to Eastern Michigan University where she was a four-year letterwinner. She ranks 13th in EMU career rankings in both kills and attempts and is eighth in block assists. Her hitting percentage of .778 ranks third and she once had 10 blocks in a match, which is tied for 11th.

In track, Piccolini utilized her jumping ability as a high and long jumper. She won the Division II state title in both events. She was a long jump champion as a junior and finished second that season in the high jump. Piccolini's all-time best high jump of 5 ft. 9 is still the Division II, Region 7 record as well as the best-ever in the Ohio Valley. As a senior, Piccolini brought home the state gold in the high jump, clearing 5 ft. 7. Her mark of 18 ft. 1/2 in., which ranks third all-time in the Ohio Valley, was good enough for third place. She also qualified to the state meet in the 400 once and ran on sprint relays for the Lady Red Devils that also qualified for the state meet. Piccolini was also a five-time OVAC champion. She was chosen to take part in the prestigious Midwest Meet of Champions, placing second in the long jump, fourth in the high jump and sixth in the 400.

On the basketball court, Piccolini scored more than 1,000 points in her career and earned first-team all-Ohio as a senior when she scored 18 points a game. She was first-team all-OVAC as a senior and she was also chosen for the OVAC All-Star Game. She was twice named team MVP.

While at EMU, Piccolini joined the Eagles' track team and finished fifth in the Mid-American Conference Outdoor Championship Meet in the high jump. Piccolini graduated from Eastern Michigan in 2006 with a degree in Sports Medicine-Exercise Science. She then earned a doctorate of Physical Therapy from Wheeling Jesuit University in 2008.

Jedidiah Stephen (Athlete - 2000s)



Jedidiah Stephen (Shenandoah High School, Class of 2002). There isn't a sport you can name that this former Zep didn't shine in during his high school career. While earning all-Ohio in football and basketball, it was on the baseball diamond where Stephen experienced his greatest success.

A four-year starter for the Zeps, Stephen was one of the finest hitters the Ohio Valley has ever seen. He led the Zeps in hitting as a senior at .541, which still stands as the school's all-time best. For his career, Stephen batted .475. He also had significant pop in his bat as evidenced by the 12 home runs he hit as a senior, which ranked second in Ohio that season.

Stephen made an impact early in his baseball career, leading the Zeps in home runs (6) and average (.474) as a freshman. He was named to the all-Eastern District team three times and earned first-team all-Ohio as a senior. Along with that, he was named all-OVAC and all-PVC numerous times during his career. As a senior, he was named OVAC Class AAA Player of the Year and was chosen for the Mizuno All-Star Team. He was a four-time recipient of the "Golden Bat Award."

Stephen signed a baseball scholarship with The Ohio State University and made an instant impact. A four-year letterman, he started 195 games at third base and shortstop and batted .286 for his career. He had 135 hits, 18 home runs, 95 RBI, scored 83 runs and drew 40 walks. A multiple-time all-Academic Big Ten selection, he was named second team all-conference as a senior. He had a brief stint as a professional. He was drafted in the eighth round of the Major League Baseball Draft by the Baltimore Orioles.

Before settling strictly on baseball, Stephen was a four-year letterman in football. An outstanding punter and defensive back, Stephen had a brilliant senior season at quarterback, earning first-team all-Ohio, all-OVAC, all-PVC and an invitation to both the North-South and OVAC All-Star Games. He finished his prep career with 4,110 yards and 42 touchdowns passing. He ran for 1,992 yards and 32 touchdowns. On the defensive side, he picked off 19 passes.

On the basketball court, Stephen helped guide the Zeps to a 50-17 record during his career. He filled it up for 25 points a game as a senior and finished his career with 1,278 points. He scored 549 of those during his final campaign, including a single-game high of 55. Stephen was a first-team all-Ohioan as a senior and earned Ohio Division III State Player of the Year honors to go along with Eastern District Player of the Year, all-OVAC and all-PVC. He was also the Eastern District nominee for "Mr. Basketball" and took part in both the North-South and OVAC All-Star Games.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Class of 2014

OVAC Hall of Fame

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Bill Brubaker (OVAC Family)



Bill Brubaker (Mechanicsburg, Pa. High School, Class of 1974). Not only has Brubaker enjoyed an ultra-successful 34-year stint as head swimming coach at The Linsly School, he's been a driving force behind the continued growth of the sport throughout the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference.

He has spent his entire high school coaching career at Linsly and has continued the school's amazing OVAC dominance in the pool. Brubaker's list of conference titles includes: combined titles (1981, '82, '83 and '84); boys titles (1985, '86, '87, '88, '89, '90, '91, '92, '99, 2003, '04, '5, '09, '10, '11, '12, '13); and girls titles (1990, '91, '93, '94, 2009, '11, '12, 13).

He has coached four All-American swimmers – Bert Hazlett, Jenny Loew, Theron Pappas and Kevin Rosepappa – and has coached a total of 31 Academic All-Americans. Brubaker serves as the meet director of the OVAC Swimming Championships and the event was renamed the Bill Brubaker Swimming Championships in 2013.

For "Bru", swimming is a 365-day a year sport, everything from regular season high school meets to summer meets to AAU competitions.

As an athlete, Brubaker was a four-year letterman in swimming at Mechanicsburg High and a four-year letterman at West Virginia University. He served as team captain and won the John Law Award as the outstanding senior swimmer. After obtaining his Bachelor of Science degree in Education and Teaching from West Virginia University, he spent a year as an assistant coach with the Mountaineers' swim team and served one year as meet director of the Eastern Intercollegiate Swimming Championships. A teacher at Linsly since 1980, he serves as chair of the Social Studies Department.

James Companion (OVAC Contributor)



James F. Companion, Jr. (The Linsly School, Class of 1990). He established Scholastic Sports Marketing, LLC along with Bill Ihlenfeld in 2004 (he has been the sole owner since 2011) to help high school leagues raise money to enhance the overall experience for high school student-athletes by developing revenue streams while fostering awareness of the athletic events, conferences and institutions.

Scholastic Sports Marketing, LLC began its association with the OVAC in the 2005-06 school year, overseeing marketing and promotions for the conference. Companion has secured local, regional and national sponsorships (among them the likes of McDonald's, Huntington Bank and Subway Restaurants) and not only acquires the sponsors, but makes sure that the bills are paid.

Thanks to SSM, more than $750,000 has been generated to help make the Conference run, including more than $218,000 return to the schools through the basketball playoffs over the past seven year and more than $42,000 to provide certified trainers at every Conference-run event. SSM has also served as the marketing arm for the West Virginia "Super Six" State Football Championships since 2008 and, along with WTOV-TV9, directs the "OVAC Kickoff Night" each year. Prior to forming Scholastic Sports Marketing, LLC, Companion performed marketing and promotion duties at both Davidson College and the University of South Carolina; served as an associate commissioner of the Big South Conference; and served on national Association of Collegiate Marketing Administrators (NACMA) Board.

Jim Potts (Coaches)



Jim Potts (Buckhannon-Upshur High School, Class of 1964). Potts began teaching at Cameron in 1971 and he started the junior high wrestling program there that year. He spent 31 years as head wrestling coach of the Dragons (1974-2005) and later returned as an assistant varsity coach for several years. Potts compiled an impressive 363-94-4 dual meet record, winning 87 tournament championships and finishing as runner-up on 36 occasions. In OVAC competition, Potts-led mat squads amassed 15 OVAC Class A tournament championships (1984, '91, '92, '93, '94,, '95, '96, '97, '98, '99, 2000, '01, '02, '03 and '05); finishing as the overall second or third place finisher as well. His teams also won 15 OVAC Dual Meet championships. Potts was named OVAC Wrestling Coach of the Year a total of 15 times. His 1996 team won the first Bob Sandler Sportsmanship Award.

In state competition, Cameron won four consecutive W.Va. Class AA/A championships (1991-94) and finished as the runner-up three times. He was named West Virginia Class AA/A Coach of the Year five times (1989, '91, '92, '93 and '94).

He received the OVAC's prestigious "Mr. Mat" award in 2008 for his dedication and service to the sport of wrestling and was inducted into the West Virginia Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame in 2007.

He also served as head football coach at Cameron for 11 years, posting a 55-55 overall record including one appearance in the W. Va. Class A state semifinals. He coached W. Va. to a 22-14 win over Ohio in the OVAC All-Star Football Classic in 1989. Potts also spent time as the head track and baseball coach.

As an athlete, Potts competed in three sports (wrestling, football and baseball) at Buckhannon-Upshur where he was a member of the school's 1963 state championship football team and then played both football and baseball (a first team all-conference selection) at Glenville State College, earning his degree there in 1967.

Bob Roe (Coaches)



Bob Roe (Warwood High School, Class of 1925). He did it all in the athletic realm: a talented athlete; a multi-sport coach who succeeded at both the high school and college level; and even an official.

At the time he retired from high school coaching in 1965 to take the West Liberty State College job, Roe was the winningest football coach in OVAC history with a 182-122-31 record. He coached at Warwood High for 10 years (1931-40) and then at Wheeling High for 24 seasons (1941-64).

He was the winning co-coach (with Irwin Howell) of the first West Virginia-Ohio All-Star Football Game in 1940, beating Ohio 13-7. He later served as the All-Star Game Director from 1946-62.

He also led the Wheeling boys' track squad to three straight OVAC titles (1944-46) and a rare one-class W. Va. state championship in 1946 (his teams were runner-up in 1943 and '44).

At West Liberty, he coached the Hilltoppers for nine seasons including an unbeaten season in 1970 and into the NAIA playoffs in 1970 and '71 as West Virginia Conference champions. His WL coaching record was 50-24-7. He was twice named WVC Coach of the Year.

Roe was also a basketball official for 20 years, serving three terms as president of the Ohio Valley Board of Approved Basketball Officials.

As an athlete, he was a team captain of the Warwood High football team and a four-year varsity performer at Bethany College.

Roe, who passed away in 1984, is a member of five other halls of fame – West Virginia State Sports, City of Wheeling, Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan, West Liberty University and Bethany College. He was also the recipient of the OVAC Track Cal Giffin Award.

Jack Prettyman (Officials)



Jack Prettyman (Moundsville High School, Class of 1958). One of the best-known officials in the Ohio Valley, he retired in 2007 after working 43 years as a member of the Ohio Valley Board of Approved Football Officials, spending two years as president, two years a vice-president and 10 years on the Executive Board; and 20 years as a member of the Ohio Valley Board of Approved Basketball Officials, serving as president and vice-president.

He worked WVSSAC playoff games for 30 years, including the finals eight times, as well as the West Virginia North-South All-Star Game; and spent 20 years working OHSAA playoff games plus the Ohio North-South All-Star Game.

Prettyman officiated the Rudy Mumley OVAC All-Star Charity Football Classic five times and was the Honorary Referee at the game in 2008.

He officiated West Virginia Conference games for 30 years in basketball and 27 in football, including 20 years at the finals in basketball and eight years of playoffs in football; and he also worked games in the Eastern 8 and Atlantic 10 conferences for 25 years, including 10 years of playoff action.

Prettyman officiated thee years in the professional Indoor Football League, working the championship game in 2002.

A resident of Glen Dale, he received the Robert Dawson OVAC Basketball Officials Award in 2002; a Special Achievement Award from the Dapper Dan Club of the Upper Ohio Valley in 2008 and several service awards from various officiating organizations.

Paul Rickards (Athlete - 1940s)



Paul Rickards (Wheeling High School, Class of 1944). He was a three-sport star who was labeled by Hall of Fame coach Bob Roe as the best football player he ever coached. The 6-foot-1, 190-pounder played center as a sophomore before becoming a running-passing quarterback-tailback-linebacker-punter for the Wildcats. He was the only two-time first team, one-class all-stater in 1942 and 1943 and was voted the top state passer for two years. As a senior, he completed 60 passes - a rare total at the time - for nine TDs and rushed for 10 scores. He also was the team's top tackler. kick returner and punter. He earned nickname of "Pitching Paul" because of passing in era or mostly running.

In basketball, he was a three-year regular and helped the Wildcats win the state one-class title as a junior when Wheeling capped 26-1 record by winning its final 21 games. He was first team All-OVAC on the first-ever selections and first team one-class all-state as a senior and second team as a junior

In track, he won a rare "double" in the one-class state meet, capturing the long jump and shot put for the state runner-up team. He also helped Wheeling win the first of three straight one-class OVAC crowns.

Recruited for football by Pitt, he was a four-year letterman who led the NCAA in passing yards as a freshman with a school-record 897 yards.

He also played one year in the NFL with the Los Angeles Rams. He passed away in 1999.

Mike Ingram (Athlete - 1950s)



Mike Ingram (Bellaire High School, Class of 1957). Nicknamed "The Tank" because of his physical play as a 5-foot-9, 220-pound fullback-linebacker, he was a three-sport Big Reds' stalwart in football, basketball and track. He led Bellaire to football records of 7-3, 9-0-1, 7-3 and 5-5.

He was a two-time All-Eastern Ohio choice who was All-OVAC Class AA first team, All-Valley second team, and AP All-Ohio second team as a junior.

Recruited by Ohio State coach Woody Hayes, he was converted to an offensive guard-linebacker and became a three-year Buckeye starter and 1961 team co-captain for the 8-0-1 record Big Ten Conference champions which were ranked No. 2 in both wire service polls. The 8-2 record 1960 team was ranked No. 8.

He earned first team All-Big Ten as a senior and played in the East-West Shrine game and Hula Bowl game. He was drafted by the NFL Washington Redskins and AFL Boston Patriots, but didn't play pro ball. He passed away in 1981.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Jim Kerr (Athlete - 1950s)



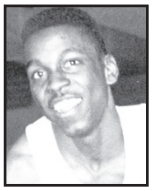
Jim Kerr (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 1957) After playing quarterback as a junior, the first-year 6-foot, 180-pound running back led the Red Devils to a 7-0-2 record while leading the Ohio Valley in scoring with a school-record 150 points in nine games. He rushed for 1,298 yards (8.3 yards per carry) and landed six pass receptions for 81 yards.

As a defensive back, he had seven pass interceptions and the speedster also returned kicks (7 kickoffs for 323 yards and five punts for 133 yards). He earned All-Ohio, All-Valley, All-OVAC and All-Eastern Ohio football honors and he also competed in track.

The multi-threat back earned a scholarship to Penn State where he was a three-year regular running back-defensive back and kick returner on teams with records of 7-3, 9-2 and 6-3-1. As a senior, he was the Nittany Lions' top rusher, pass receiver, kickoff returner and scorer. He scored three touchdowns against Army. In his last two seasons, Penn State won the first two Liberty Bowls over Alabama and Oregon.

He was drafted by the Washington Redskins and was a regular safety in his only two seasons. As a rookie, he led the Redskins in pass interceptions (7) and kickoff returns (14 for 385 yards) before being slowed by a leg injury. He is deceased.

James 'Junior' Moore (Athlete - 1960s)



James "Junior" Moore (Wheeling High School, Class of 1969). He was a three-sport Wildcat all-star in football, basketball and baseball who earned a football scholarship to Wake Forest.

In football, the 5-foot-10, 170-pound running back-defensive back-kick returner was the OV's top Class AAA rusher with 1,142 yards on 189 carries with nine TDs plus 14 pass receptions for 181 yards and a score. He was first team All-Valley, All-OVAC, All-Mountaineer League and All-City Offense and Defense while earning second team Class AAA All-State while placing sixth in voting for the Kennedy Award. He was second team All-Valley as a junior.

A two-year basketball letterman on top Wildcat teams, the left-handed point guard led the 1969 team in scoring (20 ppg), steals and assists as Wildcats went 19-1 in regular season to win the OVAC Class AAA crown and ranked No. 2 in the final state regular season poll. He earned first team Class AAA All-State, All-OVAC, All-Valley, All-City and All-Mountaineer League. As a junior, he was sixth man on a Wildcat team which advanced to the state Class AAA semifinals.

In baseball, he earned three letters as a first baseman-pitcher and started on the state one-class championship team as a junior. He earned second team one-class All-State twice and, as a senior, was first team All-Valley while leading the Wildcats in hitting (.446).

At Wake Forest, he led the freshman team in rushing before earning three varsity letters and helping the Deacons, as a sophomore, win their first-ever Atlantic Coast Conference title. He was a running back, wide receiver, defensive back and kickoff-punt returner. He averaged over 20 yards per kickoff returns for his career and had an 89-yard TD return vs. Virginia Tech as a junior.

Gordon Gordon (Athlete - 1970s)



Gordon "Charley" Gordon (John Marshall High School, Class of 1977). He was nothing short of outstanding for the Monarchs in three sports — track, wrestling and football.

As a weightman in track for the powerful JM thinclads, Gordon established the all-time Ohio Valley discus mark on the strength of his 166-9 toss as a senior, a season in which he won the OVAC Class 3-A and West Virginia state discus championships. He was second in the state shot put event with a heave of 52-4. As a junior, he was OVAC and state discus runner-up to OVAC Hall of Famer John Leon of Brooke.

He grappled for OVAC Hall of Fame Coach Bill Hinegardner and scripted a senior season to remember. Gordon went undefeated, leading the Monarchs to the overall OVAC crown. He went on to cap his mat career with the W. Va. Class AAA heavyweight title.

Gordon was also a standout on the football field, starting three years as an offensive lineman and linebacker. He received all-Mountaineer League and all-OVAC laurels as senior, although the Monarchs won just one game.

The 6-2, 255-pounder received an offer to walk on to the WVU football program. The move paid off as Gordon earned a full scholarship while starting two seasons on the offensive line and lettering three times.

His senior season of 1980 marked the inaugural campaign for Coach Don Nehlen and new Mountaineer Field. He was elected as a co-captain that season.

Mike Smith (Athlete - 1980s)



Mike Smith (Buckeye Trail High School, Class of 1983). He enjoyed both personal and team success as the first four-year basketball letterman for the Warriors.

Individually, Smith finished a stellar hoops career with 2,188 points, which ranks 23rd all-time in the OHSAA record book.

He scored 25 points in his first varsity game as a freshman, finishing with 254 points that season. He then displayed remarkable consistency, scoring 625 as a sophomore; 643 as a junior and 666 as a senior for a four-year average of 22.8 points per game.

Smith was selected to the all-Ohio Class A first team three times, including being named the "Player of the Year" in 1983. He was also a three-time first team all-Eastern District and all-District 12 selection, named "Player of the Year" on both teams as a senior; and was a first team all-OVAC Class 2-A honoree. He played in the OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic and the Ohio North-South All-Star Game following his senior season. In addition to ranking as Trail's all-time leading scorer, he is also the leading rebounder with 643 and is third all-time in free throw percentage at 83.9 percent.

During Smith's career, Trail posted a sparkling record of 88-8 under the guidance of Coach Terry Leggett. The Smith-led Warriors won three sectional titles, three district crowns and one regional championship, making a state tournament appearance in 1983 with Smith scoring 33 points in that game. Trail also captured two OVAC crowns.

Smith continued to showcase his basketball talents at Rio Grande College, graduating in 1987 with a degree in business. A four-year letterman, he ranks ninth all-time on the Rio Grande scoring list with 1,741 points.

He was inducted into the District 12 Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame in 2010.

Alan Jack (Athlete - 1960s)



Alan Jack (Wintersville High School, Class of 1966). He was a three-year starter as a 6-foot, 205-pound fullback-linebacker on teams coached by OVAC Hall of Famer Bob Kettlewell that went 9-1, 8-1-1 and 9-1 with only one loss to Ohio Valley foes. The last two teams also won Big Eight League titles. He was a blocking fullback but, as a senior, he also rushed 115 times for 583 yards and scored 60 points.

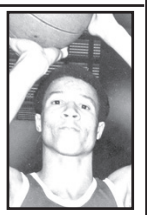
His senior honors included All-OVAC Class AAA, All-Valley Big School, All-Eastern Ohio and All-Big Eight.

He earned a scholarship to Ohio State and, after playing on the freshman team, he became a three-year starter as a 6-foot, 220-pound offensive guard on teams with records of 6-3, 10-0 and 8-1. The unbeaten 1968 Big Ten Conference champion team defeated an O.J. Simpson-led Southern California team, 27-16 in the Rose Bowl and was crowned National Champion with a No.1 ranking in both national polls.

Jack was selected co-captain of the Buckeyes' 8-1 record 1969 team which was co-Big Ten Conference champion.

He also played in the 1970 Hula Bowl game.

Rick Coles (Athlete - 1970s)



Rick Coles (Wheeling High, Class of 1971). He was a star for the Wildcats in both football and basketball, earning a scholarship to West Virginia University in the latter.

The 6-3, 170-pound guard enjoyed a record-setting hoop career. He averaged 33.7 in the regular season as a senior, leading the Wildcats to a 21-3 record and OVAC championship honors. That squad also went on to win sectional and regional titles en route to a state tourney berth.

He tied the school's single-game scoring record, held by legendary Everett Brinkman, with 54 points in a 147-88 conquest of Oak Glen. He also averaged an amazing 22 rebounds per game in his final campaign.

For his career, Coles netted 1,389 points, just 22 shy of Wheeling High's school standard.

He was a two-time all-Valley "Big School", all-OVAC and all-W.Va. first team honoree. Coles was selected as state player of the year by the Morgantown Touchdown Club following his senior campaign.

Coles also starred on the gridiron, lettering three years while performing at quarterback, wide receiver and defensive back. As a senior, he ranked second in OVAC Class AAA passing yards with more than 1,100 yards.

Coles also used his versatility and athleticism on the Wildcats' track team, competing in relays and as a high jumper.

At WVU, Coles was the second-leading scorer as the Mountaineers' freshman squad via his 14-point average. He earned a letter as a sophomore, playing in 22 games. As fate would have it, however, Coles suffered a broken leg in the pre-season of his junior year which limited his play over the next two years.

Basketball coaching icon Sam Andy called Coles one of the two best players he ever coached, the other being Hall of Famer Anthony Reed.

Stan Boroski (Athlete - 1980s)



Stan Boroski (Buckeye South High School, Class of 1981). He may be best known for his baseball career, but Boroski was a tremendous three-sport standout at Buckeye South. He earned all-Ohio honors in football, basketball and baseball for the Rebels.

Boroski quarterbacked South into the football post-season as a senior, becoming the first Ohio Valley school to play in the OHSAA grid playoffs. He, unfortunately, missed that game due to an injury incurred in the Buckeye North contest.

As a junior, he was a hard-running tailback. He rushed for more than 1,200 yards and 15 TDs that season. He also booted four field goals, amassing 116 total points.

In hoops, Boroski finished as Buckeye South's fifth all-time leading scorer.

As a senior, the Rebels got off to a 1-4 start while Boroski still nursed his football injury. Upon his return, South reeled off 16 straight wins. He averaged 16 points a game in his senior season, after posting an 18-point average as a junior. The 6-2 forward was a three-year letterman for legendary coach Henry Laszasz.

In baseball, Boroski starred on the mound and at the plate for South.

He batted .400 as a senior and nearly the same as a junior. He tossed a no-hitter as a senior. Boroski led the Rebels to a pair of OVAC championships and two districts berths.

The talented right-hander also was a standout in Legion baseball, performing for Maynard. In his final season for Post 666, he batted .327 while going 6-2 on the hill.

The Rayland native, who attended Ohio University earning a biology degree, played two seasons in the Milwaukee Brewers' organization. He ended his professional playing days as a pitcher in the Kansas City Royals organization. His minor league career spawned a long and successful coaching career in professional baseball. Boroski spent 18 years coaching with the Houston Astros organization before being named bullpen coach for the Tampa Bay Rays on Dec. 17, 2009. He still holds that post today, overseeing one of the premier staffs in Major League Baseball.

OVAC Hall of Fame

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Chad Brinker (Athlete - 1990s)



Chad Brinker (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1998). This Purple Rider legend shined in three sports during his four-year prep career, but it was in football where he really left a lasting mark.

After lettering as a freshman, Brinker got his chance to be the Purple Riders' main tailback midway through his sophomore season and clearly made the most of his opportunity. Brinker finished his prep career with 3,984 yards, which ranks second all-time at Ferry, and 51 touchdowns. The majority of his career yards came as a senior when he racked up 2,024 yards. After both his junior and senior seasons, Brinker was named first-team all-Eastern District and first-team all-Ohio. As a senior, he was the district's offensive player of the year and also the district's nominee for Ohio's coveted Mr. Football Award. He was also named a USA Today All-American. Along with his state honors, Brinker was twice named first-team all-OVAC and all-Valley, serving as a co-captain both in 1996 and 1997. Brinker took part in the Rudy Mumley OVAC All-Star Charity Football Classic, but after rushing for 160 yards in the first half, he was injured and didn't play in the second half.

His success wasn't limited to the high school ranks. Brinker signed with Ohio University and earned four letters for the Bobcats. He was twice named all-MAC and was chosen to play in the 2002 Hula Bowl All-Star Game in Hawaii. Brinker finished his career with the Bobcats with 2,826 yards and 27 rushing touchdowns, which rank fifth and fourth on the O.U. career listing, respectively. Of his yards, he ran for 1,099 as a senior. He put forth 10, 100-yard rushing games during his career. Brinker put forth those numbers despite missing four games as a junior because of an injury. Though he went undrafted, Brinker signed with the New York Jets in 2003 and played in the preseason before being released on the final cut. He scored two touchdowns that pre-season. He played in NFL Europe in 2004.

Along with his football exploits, Brinker was an all-Ohioan in track and field. He finished seventh in the Division II 100-meter dash as a senior, running 11.27. He also lettered in basketball and baseball. He earned all-OVAC in hoops.

Since graduating from Ohio University with a degree in exercise science, Brinker served as a radio color analyst for Bobcats' football games, served as an assistant coach at Westerville Central and since 2010 has worked in the player personnel department with the Green Bay Packers. He received a Super Bowl ring after the Packers defeated the Steelers in 2010.

David Bertolino (Athlete - 2000s)



David Bertolino (Buckeye Local High School, Class of 2003). This Panther product was a one-sport athlete, but was one of the best wrestlers to ever grace the mats in the Ohio Valley.

Bertolino was a four-year regular at Buckeye, but really blossomed as a junior and senior. He won the individual championship at the OVAC Tournament in both seasons.

He was a state qualifier as a junior and came back as a man on a mission the following season. During his senior season, Bertolino put forth an unblemished 44-0 record and won the 160-pound Division II state championship in the process.

Bertolino finished his prep career with a strong 154-22 record and was named the 2003 Eastern District Wrestler of the Year. Bertolino didn't hang up the prep singlet immediately after receiving his OHSAA gold medal. He went to the National High School Senior Coaches Association Championship Tournament and placed third, earning all-American honors at 160 pounds.

Prior to his senior season, Bertolino was the gold medalist at the National Open Wrestling Championship and then won the gold at the AAU Junior Olympics.

He wrestled for four years at Iowa State University, three of those seasons were spent under Bridgeport High graduate and OVAC Hall of Famer Bobby Douglas.

During his senior season, Bertolino earned NCAA All-American by virtue of finishing in the top eight at 197 pounds in his only trip to the national tournament.

All told, Bertolino finished his collegiate career with a 68-41 record.

Following his collegiate career, Bertolino attempted to qualify to the United States Olympic Team for the 2012 games in London. He spent more than a year at the United States Olympic Training Center in Colorado training.

Karrie Hutchins (Athlete - 2000s)



Karrie Hutchins (Wheeling Park High School, Class of 2001). This former Patriot helped officially put Wheeling Park soccer on the map locally and around the state of West Virginia during her splendid prep career.

Hutchins was a defensive standout and unquestioned leader of the Lady Patriots, which resulted in her twice being named the West Virginia Gatorade Player of the Year (2000 and 2001).

With Hutchins playing a key role, the Patriots claimed three straight West Virginia Class AAA state titles and four straight big-school OVAC crowns.

Along with those honors, she was a three-time first-team all-state selection and four-time all-OVAC pick. She was named OVAC Player of the Year as a junior and senior.

Hutchins was inducted to the Wheeling Park High School Hall of Fame in 2007.

After her prep career, Hutchins played at West Virginia University where she became the first Mountain State native to start for the Mountaineers' women's program.

Hutchins started 45 of 49 career matches as a defensive player and during her career, the Mountaineers posted 30 shutouts.

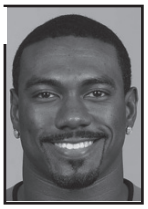
During the 2003 season, with Hutchins playing a key role, the Mountaineers advanced to the Sweet 16 in the NCAA Tournament. The season prior, WVU was the Big East Mid-Atlantic champion.

She was named a team captain for the 2005 season, but her career came to an end due to injury in the second match of that season.

Hutchins was also a standout in the classroom at Park and WVU. She was presented the Red Brown Cup in 2006, which goes to WVU's most outstanding all-around student-athlete in terms of athletic, academic and civic achievement. She also earned CoSIDA Academic All-District team in 2005 as well as the WVU Foundation Outstanding Senior and was a four-time Big East academic all-star.

Hutchins graduated with a degree in business administration and completed a Master of Professional Accountancy at WVU.

Eddie Drummond (Athlete - 1990s)



Eddie Drummond (The Linsly School, Class of 1998). Speed was the name of the game for this former Cadet, Nittany Lion and NFL Pro Bowler. Drummond was one of the fastest athletes to ever participate in the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference.

While he excelled in track and field, it was in football where Drummond truly left his mark with the Cadets, leading them to a 29-11 mark during his four years in the Orange & Black. Drummond ran for 3,918 yards and 55 touchdowns during his career. He finished with 70 TDs total and scored 424 points. He also closed his career with 5,729 all-purpose yards in 40 games. During his junior season, in which Linsly finished 10-0, Drummond ran for 1,383 yards, which was his career high. The 168 points he scored that season ranked fifth in the state of West Virginia.Drummond was named Ohio Valley Player of the Year following that season. He was three times named all-OVAC and twice named to the first-team all-state unit in West Virginia. As a junior, he was named as a defensive back and as a running back as a senior. He was the runner-up for the Kennedy Award, which goes to the Mountain State's top prep player. He was also named first-team all-Valley three times.

Drummond chose to play for Joe Paterno and Penn State over offers from the likes of Notre Dame, Michigan and Florida State. He was a wide receiver, primarily for the Nittany Lions. He made 71 receptions for 1,132 yards and five touchdowns. He also ran for 272 yards and a score.

After not being selected in the draft, Drummond signed with the Detroit Lions and made the team as a kick returner. He averaged 26 yards a kickoff return, ranked third in the NFC and fifth in the NFL. He had a punt return for a touchdown. He was selected to the Pro Bowl and named all-Pro in 2004. All told, he played five seasons in the NFL (four with Detroit and one with Kansas City). He spent the 2008 season on the Steelers' practice squad.

Other than football at Linsly, Drummond was one of the top track sprinters in the Ohio Valley. He lost only one race to an Ohio Valley athlete and that was as a freshman. He had a PR of 10.37 in the 100, which he ran during a summer meet after his senior season. He ran 21.7 in the 200 and 48.9 in the 400. He was a four-time all-Valley selection.

Dan Stephens (Athlete - 2000s)



Dan Stephens (The Linsly School, Class of 2000). It didn't matter the season, field or sport, this Cadets' product played and played well.

The only Linsly athlete to start for four years in football, basketball and baseball, Stephens shined exceptionally bright on the football and baseball fields.

Stephens was a four-year letterman for Terry Depew's football team, amassing a school record 292 tackles, playing primarily along the defensive line. He had a senior season in which he registered 76 tackles and five sacks. On the offensive side of the ball, Stephens ran for 832 yards and 12 touchdowns. He was a first-team all-state selection in Class A and was a multiple-time all-OVAC and all-Valley honoree on the gridiron.

On the baseball field, long-time Linsly head coach Gary Sprague called Stephens the "finest hitter" he'd ever coached. Stephens led the Ohio Valley in hitting as a senior at .537 and connected on eight home run and drove in a school-record 45 runs. He struck out just four times that season. Stephens still holds the Linsly career record for home runs and RBI. His efforts were recognized by his selection to the all-OVAC team multiple times and the all-Valley team multiple times.

On the basketball court, Stephens played on the interior. He still holds the Linsly record for rebounds and charges taken in his career. He was recognized on the all-Valley team for hoops.

Stephens took part in the OVAC All-Star games for all three sports and was the winner of the Zimmerman Award which goes to Linsly's best male athlete.

After receiving more than 25 collegiate scholarship offers combined between football and baseball, Stephens elected to attend the University of Pittsburgh to play football. For the Panthers, Stephens was a four-year letterman and started 41 games along the defensive line. The Panthers took part in five straight bowl games during his time in the Steel City, including the Fiesta Bowl. Stephens received the Fiesta Bowl Art Bodine MVP Award.

All told, Stephens was an all-Big East player and twice named an Academic All-American. He was listed on the All Big East Academic Team four times. Stephens also received the David Sandberg Award, which goes to the Pitt athlete with the best overall academic and athletic achievements. He received the Demale Stanley Award, which goes to a Pitt football player who has overcome the most adversity. Finally, Stephens received the Blue/Gold Award. All of the winners have their names on the 'Varsity Walk' on campus. It's the Pitt version of the Hall of Fame.

Stephens was signed by the Buffalo Bills and was in early camp with the organization in 2005.

OVAC Hall of Fame

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PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Class of 2015

OVAC Hall of Fame

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Denny Magruder (OVAC Contributor)



Dennis "Denny" Magruder (Wheeling Central Catholic High School, Class of 1967).

If there were a "best friends" list for the OVAC, his name would certainly be near the top.

Magruder has certainly opened his arms and given the nation's largest functional high school athletic conference a place to call "home", primarily in his role as Executive Director of WesBanco Arena in downtown Wheeling.

WesBanco Arena has been home to the OVAC Museum including the Hall of Fame display since 2009, with Magruder generously allowing the conference free reign of the outer concourse of the facility to showcase its rich history while also serving on the OVAC Museum Committee.

The arena is host to the OVAC Hall of Fame Banquet, OVAC Banquet of Champions, OVAC Ron Mauck Wrestling Championships, OVAC Cheering Championships and OVAC Media Night, and at one time it hosted the OVAC Samuel A. Mumley All-Star Basketball Classic.

In addition to its OVAC affiliation, WesBanco also serves as the home of the Wheeling Nailers of the East Coast Hockey League and was the home of the Ohio Valley Greyhounds of the Indoor Football League for several years. Countless high school and college basketball games have also taken place there.

Magruder was the recipient of the first Distinguished Service Award presented by the OVAC Hall of Fame Committee in 2010, and the award was named in his honor thus all future recipients received the Denny Magruder Distinguished Service Award.

He is a graduate of West Liberty State College with degree in accounting/business administration and a member of the first graduating class (1988) of the Public Assembly Facility Management School at Oglebay Resort and Conference Center; has served as a faculty member and/or as regent of the school ever since. In addition to his position at WesBanco, which he has held since 1986, he also oversees the historic Capitol Music Hall; serves on the City of Wheeling Hall of Fame Board and as Executive Director of the Greater Wheeling Sports and Entertainment Authority. Magruder has also served as rate analyst, budget director and Urban Renewal Treasurer of the City of Wheeling; Business Manager/Comptroller of the Marshall County Schools and as Treasurer of the Executive Board of the Wheeling Convention and Visitors Center.

He received the 2005 Spirit & Leadership Award and was selected to the City of Wheeling Hall of Fame in 2011.

David 'Ty' Fleming (Coach)



David "Ty" Fleming (Shadyside High School, Class of 1965). An innovative football coach who ranks among the winningest in OVAC history, he finished 23 years as a head coach with a 165-92 record.

He began his coaching career as a football and basketball assistant at Newton Falls in 1971-72, and returned to the Ohio Valley as an assistant at Bellaire from 1972-74. He then served as head boys' basketball coach at St. John Central from 1974-79, coaching the Fighting Irish football team for one season (1978) to a 7-3 record. From there, he moved on to Woolridge High near Akron as the head boys' basketball coach for one year before finally coming back to his alma mater.

During his first tour of duty at Shadyside (1980-91), he coached two OVAC championship squads (1982 and 1989) and two OHSAA playoff squads (1989 and 1991), with his '89 team reaching the state semifinal game before losing to eventual state runner-up McDonald.

In his second go-round (1999-2008), his teams went 89-24 and made eight more playoff appearances, claiming two regional titles (2000 and 2006) and reaching the Division VI State Championship Game where they lost to Maria Stein Marion Local (17-0). The Tigers had five once-beaten seasons and won three more OVAC crowns (2002, 2003 and 2007).

All told, he coached Shadyside for 22 years, compiling a career record of 158-89 there which ranks first in school history.

During his time in Tigertown, he also coached track and girls' basketball and served as the school's athletic director for 10 years. His 1982 track squad captured an OVAC title and the '83 team was Class A District champions.

Fleming was a three-time Ohio Valley "Coach of the Year" and the 2000 recipient of the Carl Hamill Award from the Dapper Dan Club of the Upper Ohio Valley. He was inducted into the Ohio Valley Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame earlier in 2015.

A stellar athlete at Shadyside whose brother Don is also in the OVAC Hall of Fame, he won 12 letters in four sports (football, basketball, baseball and track) in high school and went on to earn three letters in basketball at Kent State University, graduating there in 1969.

After retiring as a teacher/coach, he has worked as a color analyst for WTOV-TV9 and WKKX Radio on high school football broadcasts.

Linda Myers (OVAC Family)



Linda Myers (Warwood High School, Class of 1967). It's been 35 years since she joined the "family", but there's been plenty of behind the scenes contributions made to the OVAC by this tireless, friendly face of the conference.

Myers has been the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game Program Coordinator since 1994, organizing, billing and collecting ads and assisting in production of the massive program which generates thousands of dollars each year.

She served as liaison between the OVAC and what was then the Stone & Thomas Queen of Queens Pageant starting in 1987, taking over as the event coordinator in 1994 and continuing in that role for the conference until 2006. During that time, she revamped the event to include the awarding of thousands of dollars in scholarships to the participants.

Myers also has worked with the OVAC Ron Mauck Wrestling Tournament in various capacities since 1980; assisted with the OVAC Banquet of Champions for the past 20 years and the OVAC Hall of Fame Banquet for 12 years; and has served on the OVAC Museum Committee since its inception in 2009.

Myers has also assisted with the VIP hospitality for the West Virginia "Super Six" Football Championships in Wheeling for the past 21 years.

Myers' list of awards includes being honored on the covered of the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game program in 2009; receiving the James "Deadeye" Morris Award for support of OVAC wrestling in 2002; and the Howard V. Corcoran Sr., Memorial Award

A resident of Wheeling who earned a B.S. degree from West Liberty State College in 1980 and a Master's degree from West Virginia University in 1985, she was employed by the Ohio County Schools for 29 years, teaching at Triadelphia Middle School and Warwood School until her retirement in 2009.

George Kellas II (Media)



George M. Kellas II (Triadelphia High School, Class of 1973). A sometimes controversial but always passionate broadcaster, Kellas simply loved the Ohio Valley sports scene, especially high school athletics, and could be found front-and-center as area teams made their way along the football or basketball tournament trail for nearly 30 years.

After getting his feet wet on the radio as far back as 1977 and graduating from West Liberty State College in 1980, Kellas spent 12 years at WTRF-TV7 in Wheeling (1984-94) and then eight years at WTOV-TV9 in Steubenville, both as a sports anchor and commentator.

Later in his career, he co-founded radio station WKKX-AM 1600 and hosted The George Kellas Radio Talk Show from the station's inception in 2004 until he died of cancer in 2009 at the age of 53.

Kellas was a staunch supporter of the Pittsburgh professional sports teams, particularly the Steelers and the Pirates. In 1997, he began writing the Black and Gold Newsletter, a monthly publication dedicated to coverage of the Steelers which was available throughout the Ohio Valley.

Among his passions was greyhound racing at Wheeling Downs (now Wheeling Island Racetrack). In 1985, he won the O.P. Smith Award for a story on My Tipper, the winner of the 1984 Commissioners Cup at Wheeling Downs, and a stakes race at the track was named in his honor after his passing: The George Kellas Memorial.

He was the founder, co-owner and general manager of the valley's first professional indoor football team, the Steel Valley Smash, in 1999. The team later became the Ohio Valley Greyhounds and captured the National Indoor Football League championship in 2002 and 2003.

Rod Johnson (Coach)



Rod Johnson (Gahanna Lincoln High School, Class of 1965). He was a pioneer locally in the sport of high school volleyball, serving as a head coach for a total of 21 years, including 14 years where he built the Buckeye Trail High program into a respected state power and then closing out his career with a seven-year run where he injected life into a dormant Cambridge High program. Johnson's combined record was an impressive 400-109 combined record, which ranks 26th on the all-time Ohio High School Athletic Association's victory list.

During his 14 years as Trail's volleyball coach, the team amassed an incredible 294-47 record, winning at least 22 games in each of the last 11 seasons. During his tenure, the Lady Warriors won four OVAC titles, eight district crowns and three regional championships. The 1985 squad advanced to the OHSAA Class AA state semifinals, finishing with a 26-2 overall record and then four years later, in 1989, Johnson and the Lady Warriors reached the pinnacle by wining the Class AA state championship and posting a spotless 27-0 record. Trail nearly went back-to-back under Johnson's guidance, finishing as the Division III state runner-up in 1990 with a 27-3 mark.

At one point (1985-87), Johnson-coached Trail teams put together the state's fourth-longest regular season winning streak of 48 games.

He was named Ohio High School Volleyball Coaches Association Class AA "Coach of the Year" in 1989 and he won the OVAC "Coach of the Year" award in 1986. He was also inducted into the Buckeye Trail/East Guernsey Athletic Hall of Fame in 1999 and is the OVAC's first selection in the Coaches category who piloted a girls' sport.

Johnson stepped back into the coaching ranks in 2005, this time at Cambridge. Starting from the ground up, the Lady Bobcats went 6-18 his first year but that was the only losing season under Johnson. During his seven years, CHS posted a 106-62 mark. The best season came in 2009 when the Lady 'Cats were 22-4 and won OVAC, sectional and district championships before losing in the OHSAA Division II Regional semifinals. Cambridge put together an OVAC "threepeat" by also winning conference championships in 2010 and 2011, with overall records of 19-5 and 18-6, respectively. The Lady Cats were also East Central Ohio League runners-up four times under Johnson's watch. He was tabbed OVAC and District 12 Division II "Coach of the Year" in 2009 and 2010.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Duane Powell (Official)



Duane "Dibby" Powell (Bellaire High School, Class of 1952) is regarded among the best officials by area coaches as well as his peers, spending 25 years making the calls in both football and basketball.

He began officiating both sports in 1971 as a member of both the Ohio Valley Board of Approved Football Officials and the Ohio Valley Board of Approved Basketball Officials (he received a lifetime membership to both organizations).

During his career, he worked several OHSAA football playoff games and basketball tournament games and also officiated countless small college football games in the West Virginia Conference.

He was the honorary official at the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game; received the OVAC Robert Dawson Basketball Officials Award in 2000 and received a Meritorious Award from the OHSAA for outstanding service to high school athletics as an official.

Powell was born in Dilles Bottom, and he was an outstanding athlete at Bellaire High.

In basketball, he was regarded as one of the premier passers and playmakers in Ohio Valley history, scoring 358 points as a senior while earning all-Ohio, all-Valley and all-Eastern Ohio accolades.

He also played baseball for the Bellaire Civics and, as a pitcher, he signed with the Pittsburgh Pirates' farm team in Brunswick, Georgia (Georgia State League) in 1954.

He was inducted into the Bellaire High Wall of Fame in 1989.

Powell, a veteran of the U.S. Army, worked at the Martins Ferry plant of Wheeling-Pittsbugh Steel and after retiring, he was a bus driver for the Martins Ferry City Schools. He was a member of the Purple Rider Booster Club, American Legion Post 38 and the Foresters of Lansing.

He passed away in 2013 at the age of 78, and in his memory Martins Ferry and Bellaire established the Duane Powell Memorial Scholarship Softball Game in 2014.

Clyde Eads (Athlete - 1950s)



Clyde Eads (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 1958). The 6-foot-5 pencil-thin cager rewrote the Red Devils' basketball record-book in a three-year career as a rare three-time first team All-OVAC honoree in the largest Class AA. He still holds the single-game scoring mark of 55 points (against Warwood in 1958) and his 1,661 career points lasted 45 years as the school standard until broken by Dan Monteroso. He averaged 27 points a game as a senior, 26.4 for his career and more than 25 points all three seasons including 25.1 as a sophomore.

His career (1956-58) was the same period as Bridgeport superstar John Havlicek and Eads led the Red Devils to a 6-1 career record over the Havlicek-led Bulldogs. As a senior on an 18-3 team coached by Myles Witchey, the foes split games and St. C. handed Bridgeport its only regular season loss in a 17-2 overall campaign. As a junior, Eads led St. C. to three wins over Bridgeport including a sectional victory. St. C. was 18-0 in regular season and ended 21-1 overall for the best record up to that time at the school. The lone loss was to Zanesville in the Class AA district finals.

Eads led St. C. in scoring and rebounding for three seasons as the Red Devils compiled a 50-13 record.

He was recruited by Florida State University, but returned home the first year to enroll at West Liberty State and play for coach Al Blatnik, who had coached him as a sophomore and junior at St. C.

As a freshman in his only season at WLS, Eads averaged 20.7 points a game to lead the Hilltoppers and became only the second West Virginia Conference player ever to earn first team All-WVC as a freshman.

Eads thus became a rare first team all-conference player in all four seasons he competed in high school and college. He's a member of the St. Clairsville High School Athletic Hall of Fame. His family settled in the Tampa, Fla., area and he is deceased.

Rick Nau (Athlete - 1960s)



Rick Nau (Wheeling Central High School, Class of 1969). The 5-foot-10 three-year Maroon Knight guard bettered some of the Central scoring records set by OVAC Hall of Famer Dick Miller while earning every eligible all-star honor as a junior and senior.

As a senior, he scored 556 points in 22 games for a 25.3 average to break Miller's senior mark of 24.4 set in 1952, the year Miller was selected the state all-class Player of the Year by the W.Va. Sports Writers Association. Nau's 25.3 gait was tops in the Ohio Valley largest Class AAA and led all OV players with an 83.7% free throw percentage.

In a hyped match-up between Central and Bellaire St. John's, led by charter OVAC Hall of Famer Alan Hornyak, the Central ace scored a personal-high 39 points before exiting on fouls with Central leading in the fourth period. Hornyak led a St. John's rally to win and scored 44 points.

Nau's most cherished honor was being named to the West Virginia "Big" All-State Team (eight players selected regardless of class, a practice discontinued a few years later). He was also a two-time honoree on the All-Valley "Big School", All-City and All-W.Va. Catholic selections in Central's final season before joining the Secondary School Activities Commission and he was All-OVAC Class AAA first team captain as a senior. Nau, the top Catholic scorer in the state, was captain of the All-State parochial selections.He also was a two-time All-W.Va. Catholic Tournament pick. As a junior on a runner-up team, he tied for the tournament high scorer with 63 points in three games including a tourney high 26 in the finals vs. Charleston Catholic. As a senior, he had the tourney game high of 27 vs. Charleston Catholic.

Nau signed a scholarship with Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Va., where he was a three-year varsity regular after starting on the freshman team. He was team co-captain as a senior and named the school's 1973 "Male Athlete of the Year." As a sophomore, he helped the Monarchs advance to the NCAA Division II national title game where they finished runner-up to Evansville (Ind.). He was named to the South Atlantic Regional All-Tournament team as a sophomore and senior. He averaged in double figures all three varsity seasons: 16.1 as a senior, 11.3 as a junior, and 10.5 as a sophomore. Career-wise, he scored 1,028 points in 81 varsity games and dished out 423 assists. His game highs were 25 vs. Mt. St. Mary's and 24 vs. Virginia Tech and Fayetteville State.

Sam 'Buzz' Berry (Athlete - 1940s)



Sam "Buzz" Berry (Warwood High School, Class of 1946). He was the first five-time All-OVAC honoree in football and basketball. The Viking standout was selected to the first three All-OVAC Class A (smallest of two classes) basketball teams and the first two All-OVAC Class A football teams as an end. Warwood won five OVAC titles and four City of Wheeling crowns (six schools) in football and basketball during that period and also advanced to the W.Va. Basketball Tournament in 1945, his junior season. He was a multiple All-City honoree.

He also earned All-State honors in both sports. In the one-class basketball honors, he was a second team pick as a senior and third team as a junior. In football, he was a third team All-State end as a junior.

In Warwood High's best era for both football and basketball, as a junior he teamed with OVAC Hall of Famer, Edgar Martin, to lead a 22-3 record and a state tourney berth and also to a 9-1 record in football.

Berry continued his basketball antics at Shepherd College from 1949-52 where he became the Rams' first prominent player. He set a school career scoring record of 1,947 points in 83 games for a 22.9 average. As a sophomore, he became the school's first-ever All-West Virginia Conference Tournament honoree and was all-tournament three years and three times all-conference (twice second team and once first team).

He led state colleges in scoring as a junior (26.3) and senior (26.9), with the latter ranking sixth in the nation..

A Shepherd College Hall of Famer, he's a member of the All-Time West Virginia Conference team.

Berry relocated to Florida and is deceased.

Gene 'Beef' Lamone (Athlete - 1950s)



Gene "Beef" Lamone (Wellsburg High School, Class of 1951). He was an all-star two-way lineman at both the high school and college level.

As a prep senior, he earned first team Class AA All-OVAC and Class A third team All-West Virginia recognition before competing in the annual Ohio-West Virginia All-Star Game.

Recruited by West Virginia University, he became one of the Mountaineers' most honored football linemen. The four-year letterman and standout 6-foot-2, 215-pound two-way lineman from 1951-54 was team co-captain as a senior when WVU had an 8-1 record and was ranked No. 12 nationally in the final Associated Press poll. WVU was 28-7 in his four seasons including a 1953 Sugar Bowl berth as Lamone started 34 straight games.

He earned second team All-America at guard as a junior and third team AP honors as a senior. He was the only unanimous choice on the 1954 All-Southern Conference team and selected to play in the East-West All-Star Game. Lamone was drafted in the fifth round of the 1955 National Football League Draft by the Philadelphia Eagles but an injury prevented him from competing.

He later coached football at Linsly Military Institute from 1960-67 before joining the business world with a home base in the Columbus, Ohio area. The retiree currently resides in Fort Myers, Fla.

He was given his nickname "Beef" as a hefty youth by a Wellsburg neighbor, Red Donley, an OVAC Hall of Fame sportscaster.

Lamone earlier was inducted into the West Virginia Sports Hall of Fame and the West Virginia University Sports Hall of Fame.

Ed Pastilong (Athlete - 1960s)



Ed Pastilong (Moundsville High School, Class of 1961). The 6-foot-1, 165-pound Trojan quarterback set school passing records as one of the earliest 2,000-yard career passers in Ohio Valley history.

Playing QB and middle linebacker, he led the Trojans to a 23-5-2 three-year record. His 30-game career passing marks — all school records — were rare for that run-minded era: 124 completions of 238 attempts for 2,065 yards and 24 touchdowns with only seven interceptions. As a senior on an 8-2 record team, losing only to W.Va. Class AAA champion Weir and unbeaten OVAC 3-A titlist Martins Ferry, Pastilong completed 55 of 108 aerials for 10 TDs and also rushed for six scores. Against Marshall County rival Benwood Union, he completed eight of nine passes with three TDs. Veteran Trojan coach Charley Helinski said "he is the best passer Moundsville ever had."

Pastilong was highly honored as a senior. He earned first team honors on three major selections: All-W.Va. Class AAA, All-Valley "Big School" and All-OVAC Class AAA. As a junior, he was second team All-Valley "Big School" and mention on All-OVAC 3A and All-W.Va. Class AAA.

He was a three-sport letterman in football, basketball and baseball and earned baseball All-W.Va. mention, the only honor roll for the spring sport at the time. Also, outside of school, he won a Tri-State Golden Gloves boxing title.

Pastilong earned a scholarship to West Virginia U. along with two of his backfield mates — Milt Clegg and Tom Yeater — and started on the 4-1 record freshman team. He starred in the spring Blue-Gold Game where he led an upset win over the upperclassmen by accounting for three TDs and appeared poised to compete for a starting job as a sophomore.

However, a shoulder separation forced a red-shirt season in his second year and he was limited in playing time on the varsity although he lettered two years. In his sophomore season, he started a 38-7 win over Furman and completed 5 of 10 passes for 197 yards and three TDs. In the opening game as a junior, he passed for two TDs in a 20-10 win over Richmond.

Professionally, he coached at Salem College from 1969-75 before joining the WVU Athletic Department to start a 35-year career including the final 21 years as Athletic Director, the longest tenure in WVU history.

He was selected by the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dans as "Man of the Decade" for the 1990s and for a special award, "Ohio Valley Ambassador" in 2010. He is in the WVU Sports Hall of Fame and the the W.Va. Sports Hall of Fame.

After WVU retirement, he joined West Liberty U. as Chair for the Athletic Campaign & Institutional Advancement.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Rudy Jovicic (Athlete - 1970s)



Rudy Jovicic (Shadyside High School, Class of 1976). Jovicic was a three-sport performer at Shadyside, competing in baseball, football and track. He was nothing short of sensational in the latter two.

Jovicic was the unquestioned premier hurdler in the Ohio Valley during his Fleming Field days. As a senior, his hurdling prowess helped the Tigers of Tom Vichich lay claim to the state Class A championship, the first Eastern Ohio boys' track team to turn that trick.

In the state meet Jovicic finished runner-up in both the high hurdles and low hurdles. He was nipped in both races by Roland James, a future University of Tennessee defensive back and first-round draft choice of the New England Patriots. He also anchored a state-placing relay team.

Jovicic tied the all-time Ohio Valley standards in both hurdle events. He clocked a sizzling 14.2 in the highs and 19.5 in the lows.

The Intelligencer named Jovicic co-captain of the 1970s Ohio Valley All-Decade track team, along with Bridgeport's Craig Miller.

Jovicic was also a gridiron star. He was a two-time All-OVAC and All-Valley honoree. The 170-pound running back garnered some 700 infantry stripes and 11 TDs as a senior while also catching 12 passes for 206 yards and two more scores.

Jovicic also enjoyed a long career as a prep grid coach. He was head coach at Bridgeport High for three seasons after serving as a Bulldog assistant. He has also assisted with the grid program at his alma mater.

Kelly Swierkos (Athlete - 1980s)



Kelly Swierkos (Bishop Donahue High School, Class of 1986). Swierkos was a pioneer in the art of dominating pitching in the OVAC. She was nothing short of tremendous on the hill.

During her prep days, West Virginia had just one classification for girls' softball. Despite being one of the smallest schools in the state, the Lady Bishops rode Swierkos' talented right arm to unparalleled heights.

Bishop Donahue finished third in the state in her freshman season. The next two years, Swierkos hurled the Lady Bishops to the top of the mountain as they claimed a pair of state championships.

Swierkos' senior season was a bittersweet one. She battled injuries the second half of the season, but still managed to earn the mound win in the state opener. As fate would have it, the ailing Swierkos was unable to take the circle in the remainder of the double-elimination tournament and the Lady Bishops did not win again.

She finished her remarkable career with an eye-popping 63-6 record. Of those wins, eight came via the no-hitter variety.

She was accorded first-team all-state and all-OVAC plaudits her final two campaigns.

Swierkos was also a stellar hoopster. She finished her basketball career with 1,009 points, in an era when there was no three-point field goal. She also established school career records in rebounding and assists and was a first-team all-state basketball honoree as a senior.

Swierkos also delivered in quality fashion in the classroom. She graduated with a 3.85 GPA on a 4.0 scale. She also headlined The Intelligencer's All-Ohio Valley Scholar-Athlete honor roll.

Paul Hoover (Athlete - 1990s)



Paul Hoover (Steubenville High School, Class of 1994). Big Red has one of the richest baseball traditions in the Ohio Valley and this former all-Ohioan helped to form that tradition during his four years.

Playing for head coach Fred Heatherington, Hoover was a three-year regular for Steubenville, helping to lead it to the state tournament as a sophomore, back to the regional as a junior and three OVAC titles.

As a senior, Hoover had his most productive season. He batted .454, scoring 30 runs and driving in 32 more. He had 15 doubles, two triples and a home run.

Following that season, he was named Division II Eastern District Player of the Year, first-team all-OVAC and first-team all-Valley. He played in the Ohio Mizuno All-Star Series and was chosen for the Sun Belt Classic in Oklahoma.

Hoover exploded onto the prep baseball scene in 1992 when he batted .366 with six doubles, three home runs, a triple and 21 RBI.

As a junior, Hoover batted .270 with 16 runs scored and 14 RBI. He had five doubles, a triple and a home run.

For his career, he finished with a .369 average, 64 runs and 67 RBI.

Hoover was drafted in the Major League Baseball Draft in 1994 by the Houston Astros, but elected to attend Kent State University where he earned three letters as the starting catcher.

As a Golden Flash, Hoover played in 158 games, batting .269 with 86 runs scored, 87 RBI, 23 doubles, 12 home runs and four triples.

Following his junior season, Hoover was drafted in the 23rd round by the Tampa Bay Rays and he elected to sign. He played professionally from 1997 until 2010 and played in 40 major league games, batting .250 with eight RBI and five doubles. Hoover appeared in the big leagues with the Rays, Florida Marlins, Philadelphia Phillies and Boston Red Sox. He was the bullpen catcher for the Phillies in 2009 when they won the World Series.

Along with his baseball exploits, Hoover was a standout basketball player for Steubenville. He scored 1,186 points, which ranks sixth all time at Big Red. He averaged 16.5 points a game in his career. He was an all-OVAC and all-Valley performer multiple times.

Janis Trupovnieks (Athlete - 1970s)



Janis Trupovnieks (Cadiz High School, Class of 1977). Trupovnieks was big in stature and equally as big in athletic production. The 6-7, 255-pounder was a two-way force on the gridiron while also etching his name amongst the elite weightman in track and field.

Trupovnieks helped Coach Ron Pobolish's grid team enjoy great success, starting three years as a two-way tackle.

The Cardinals went 18-1-1 in Trupovnieks' final two years, losing to and tying St. John Central. The Cards bagged the OVAC 2-A title in his junior campaign.

He earned a plethora of grid honors, including AP Eastern District Lineman of the Year as a senior en route to garnering all-Ohio and all-OVAC plaudits. He recorded 67 tackles, 31 assists and covered two fumbles as a senior.

Trupovnieks was also an accomplished kicker, making 42 consecutive PATS over a two-year span. He also booted four field goals as a senior.

Trupovnieks used his lanky frame to the utmost ability in track. The All-Valley honoree captured Cadiz High's first-ever state track title by winning the Class AA discus crown via his prodigious toss of 165-3. At that time it was the third best toss in Ohio Valley annals.

As might be expected, Trupovnieks was an inside force in hoops. The three-year regular was a first-team All-Valley Small School selection and All-OVAC honoree as a senior after averaging 17 points per contest.

Trupovnieks was a nationally recruited football recruit, and he opted for the University of Tennessee. He was a two-year letterman for the Vols, starting as a senior on an 8-4 team which defeated Wisconsin 28-21 in the Garden State Bowl.

Jamie Taylor (Athlete - 1980s)



Jamie Taylor (Edison South High School, Class of 1989). Taylor played his first three prep years at Jefferson Union before consolidation changed the landscape to Edison South.

He was a baseball and basketball standout, earning all-OVAC honors in both sports. On the diamond, however, Taylor was nothing short of sensational.

As a senior, he was the OVAC "Player of the Year" to go with his All-Ohio honors. That campaign saw Taylor slam 10 home runs, driving in 33 runs to go with a robust .540 batting average.

He was no slouch on the mound, either, recording a 5-2 record with 47 Ks and a 2.11 ERA in his final campaign.

Taylor's junior season was just as productive, batting .575 with 10 homers and 46 RBI. He was also 7-4 on the hill, recording 84 strikeouts in 47 innings of work.

He ended his Edison baseball career by establishing a new Ohio Valley standard with 32 home runs.

Taylor's athletic exploits were almost as productive on the hardwood. The 6-2 guard ended his Edison South days with 1,439 points. He averaged 22.1 ppg as a senior.

Taylor's stellar baseball drew the attention of Division I college coaches from across the nation. He opted to stay close to home, signing with The Ohio State University and he enjoyed a sparkling three-year stay with the Buckeyes before heading off to the pros.

As a freshman, Taylor led OSU with seven home runs and was named to the Big Ten All-Tournament Team as the Buckeyes claimed the conference crown and placed third in the Midwest Regional.

As a junior, he was tabbed first-team all-Big Ten as a third baseman. It was a campaign in which he batted .382 with 36 walks.

Such success resulted in Taylor being chosen by the Cleveland Indians in the fifth round of the 1992 MLB Draft. He played seven seasons in the minors, topping out in Class AAA in 1998 before retiring. He batted .275 in 690 minor league games.

Mike McLeod (Athlete - 1990s)



Mike McLeod (Wheeling Park High School, Class of 1992). There's not a sport you can name that this former Patriot wouldn't have shined in had he opted to play.

In the three he did play — football, basketball and baseball — he made a lasting impression on Park and Ohio Valley history.

Football is where McLeod probably made his biggest impact, playing quarterback and linebacker. He helped guide the Patriots to the Class AAA state championship game in 1991 where they fell to Capital, 15-14, in overtime. Defensively, McLeod was one of the Patriots' leading tacklers for three consecutive seasons. As a senior, he recorded 49 tackles, two sacks and recovered two fumbles. From his quarterback spot, McLeod threw 11 touchdowns. He shared the offensive spotlight, that season, with eventual Kennedy Award winner, Boogie Johnson, who ran for 2,000 yards.

McLeod's season didn't go unnoticed. He was first-team all-state, all-OVAC and all-Valley and attracted the eyes of college recruiters. He had scholarships offers from the likes of West Virginia, Indiana, Marshall and others.

However, McLeod's ultimate passion lied with baseball where he was a two-year standout as an outfielder. He batted .490 as a senior, which was the second best in the Ohio Valley, regardless of class. He had 42 hits, seven doubles, a triple and three home runs. He drove in 20 and scored 28 runs. Again, he was recognized as first-team all-state in Class AAA, all-OVAC and all-Valley.

On the basketball court, McLeod was a point-guard for the Patriots for three years, helping to lead them to the state tournament twice. He finished his career with 1,230 points and averaged 21.7 points and 11 rebounds per game as a senior. McLeod was a first-team all-state selection and was also first-team all-OVAC (three times) and all-Valley (twice).

Despite the college football offers, McLeod opted for baseball right out of high school. Although that didn't pan out and he eventually enrolled at Youngstown State and joined the football team. He was a member of the Penguins' Division I-AA national championship squad in 1994, playing for Jim Tressel.

A member of the Wheeling Park Sports Hall of Fame, he is currently the Patriots' head baseball coach.

OVAC Hall of Fame

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PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Brittany Hocker (Athlete - 2000s)



Brittany Hocker (Bridgeport High School, Class of 2004). The Bridgeport Bullet, as she was nicknamed during her prep track and field days, set the standard for female sprinting in the Ohio Valley and the state of Ohio.

Hocker burst onto the scene in 2001 when she won the 200-meter dash at Dayton's Welcome Stadium as a freshman. Earlier in that state meet, she finished second in the 100-meter dash.

That 100-meter race proved to be the final time she lost in that event for the remainder of her prep career. Hocker was undefeated during her sophomore, junior and senior seasons in the short sprint. Prior to the state final, she had been unblemished as a freshman, too.

As a sophomore, Hocker notched her first state championship in the 100-meters, but settled for second in the 200.

Hocker was a four-time OVAC Class 1A 100-meter dash champion and three-time Class 1A 200-meter champion. Though she never ran the race in the postseason, Hocker was a three-time OVAC Class 1A 400-meter champion.

As a prep sprinter, Hocker's personal best in the 100 was 11.81 seconds. That stood as a state record in Division III until 2011. Her mark, which was set during her senior season, still stands as a state meet record.

Her 200 personal best time of 24.22 is also a state meet record. She set that in 2004 when she completed her second consecutive sprint sweep.

After high school, Hocker opted to continue her track and field career at the University of Akron where she put forth an impressive career, earning all-Mid American Conference honors. She was the MAC Indoor and Outdoor conference champion in the 200 in 2008. She set the Akron school record indoor for the 400 and placed in both the 100 and 400 in 2005 as a true freshman. As a collegiate runner, Hocker focused more on the 400 and set the Akron record for both indoor and outdoor competition with times of 54.39 (indoor) and 54.22 (outdoor).

Along with track and field, Hocker also earned letters during her high school career in basketball.

Ted Talkington (Athlete - 200s)



Ted Talkington (Magnolia High School, Class of 2004). This Blue Eagle product could simply score the basketball during his prep career.

Magnolia's all-time scoring leader finished his career with 2,024 points, which was more than 600 points better than his nearest competitor. As a senior, Talkington scored at a 31 points per game clip, which followed up a junior season in which he poured in 29.5 points a contest.

During the 2003-04 campaign, Talkington established his career-high point total with 45. As a senior, he shot 82 percent from the foul line and connected on 64 three-pointers.

Talkington's game wasn't limited to scoring, however. He also averaged 5.8 assists, 5.5 rebounds and 2.7 steals.

Along with leading the state in scoring twice, including the 2002-03 season, he helped guide the Blue Eagles to the Class AA state championship. By doing that, he became just one of five Mountain State products to accomplish the feat, joining the likes of Jerry West, O.J. Mayo, Herbie Brooks and Bill Maphis.

Talkington's aforementioned career-point total ranks 16th in West Virginia history

He was a first-team all-state selection as both a junior and senior and captained the team both seasons. He was a second-team all-state pick after his senior season. He was also an all-OVAC and all-Valley performer, captaining the all-Valley team twice.

He also scored 20 points in helping West Virginia rally for a 92-82 victory in the Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Game.

After high school, Talkington turned down several collegiate offers to accept an academic scholarship and walk-on spot at West Virginia University. He played in 46 games during his career with the Mountaineers and lettered twice. He was a member of WVU's National Invitational Tournament championship team in 2007.

He opted not to play basketball during his final season of eligibility, electing to enroll in medical school after graduating with a degree in chemistry with a 4.0 grade point average.

Along with his basketball prowess, Talkington was a standout for the Blue Eagles' football team. He was twice named all-OVAC — a first-team selection as a junior and honorable mention pick as a senior.

Class of 2016

OVAC Hall of Fame

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John Nese (OVAC Contributor)



John Nese (East Pittsburgh High School, Class of 1956). Teacher… coach….official…broadcaster. He's done them all.

While spending 54 years in the education field, Nese coached boys/girls basketball and baseball; followed that up with a fine officiating career and all the while worked as a radio broadcaster.

In basketball, he began his coaching career at Follansbee St. Anthony (1960-61), winning the W. Va. Class B State Catholic Championship with a 17-5 record. After two years (1961-63) as an assistant at East Pittsburgh High – his alma mater – he came to Steubenville Catholic Central where he coached the boys' team 10 years (1963-73) with a 121-87 record; three sectional titles, three district titles and one OVAC championship (1973) when his squad compiled a 22-2 overall record – the best in school history – led by fellow Hall of Famer Jim Wood.

He later returned to the hardwood as the Steubenville Catholic girls' coach (1987-90), posting a 56-10 record with two sectional titles; two OVAC crowns (1988 and '89) and the school's best record (21-2 in '89).

He closed out his hoops' coaching with the Indian Creek junior high girls' team (1995-2007) where he won an additional 116 games against 40 losses.

He was named Coach of the Year multiple times in the Eastern District and District 5 and was selected as the co-coach of the United States All-Stars for the 1973 Dapper Dan Roundball Classic in Pittsburgh.

In baseball, Nese coached Steubenville Catholic from 1963-75 with a sparkling 197-77 record. His teams won seven sectionals, five districts and one regional, finishing as the state runner-up to Shaker Heights in 1965. His 1974 squad posted a school-best 24-4 overall mark.

After retiring from coaching, Nese wanted to remain close to high school athletics and became a baseball/softball umpire. He was a respected member of that profession as well, and was honored to work in 10 consecutive OHSAA State Softball Tournaments. He also served as an instructor with the Steubenville Umpires Association.Nese also had a 30-plus year career as a WSTV radio play-by-play announcer and color commentator, working countless football, basketball and American Legion baseball games.

This marks Nese's sixth Hall of Fame selection. He's also in the Ohio High School Baseball Coaches Association (1981), the East Boros Chapter of the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame (1986); the OHSAA Officials Hall of Fame (1996); the District 5 Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame (2006); and the Franciscan University Hall of Fame (2008).

At East Pittsburgh (Pa.) High, Nese was a three-year letterman and co-captain of the Class B Pennsylvania state runner-up. He graduated from the College of Steubenville in 1960 where he was a four-year letterman and a member of the No. 1-ranked small college basketball team (1957-58) and team co-captain as a senior. He obtained his master's degree from the University of Dayton in 1974.

Bob Koch (OVAC Family)



Bob Koch (John Marshall High School, Class of 1971). Back in 2009 when he retired from Cameron High School, Koch offered a telling quote: "My goal has always been to leave this a better place than it was when I found it."

In Koch's case, everywhere he's been and everyone he's known has been better for it…and that certainly includes every corner of the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference.

His association with the conference dates back to 1981 when began helping with the hands-on calculations of the scores at the OVAC Ron Mauck Wrestling Tournament, a role he filled for the next 30 years until the results were computerized. At that point, he continued to assist by working the bullpen area. He received the OVAC Tournament Service Award in 1998 and the OVAC Tournament Director's Award in 2014.

Koch has been on the OVAC Executive Board – the governing body of the bi-state conference – since 1989, first as the Class A representative and then as the Game Director of the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game.

It's in that role – one he assumed in 2001 - that he has shined above all others due to the vast undertaking of the event from the selection of coaches and players, coordinating the week-long camp which is currently at Bethany College to all of the game-related activities which take place the week of the game.

Respected for his opinions and his knowledge of the history of the conference, Koch has also been a member of the OVAC Hall of Fame Committee and the OVAC Museum Committee for several years.

Koch graduated from West Virginia University and later obtained his master's degree in math education there. He spent one year at Martins Ferry High before moving on to Cameron where he began a 33-year career as a math teacher. He assumed the role of athletic director in 1989 and spent the next 20 years guiding the Dragons' athletic programs to countless successes and facilities upgrades before retiring in 2009. Koch also spent several years as an assistant wrestling coach at CHS under the highly-successful Jim Potts.

He served as co-chairman of the Friends of Cameron Football event for six years, and was a special honoree of that group in 2015 for his contributions.

Jimmy Mountain (Media)



James A. "Jimmy" Mountain (St. John Central High School, Class of 1931). You might say he "looked down from the mountain" as far as Ohio Valley journalists were concerned.

Mountain chronicled the events of the area – both in and out of the athletic realm – with particular emphasis on the Bellaire area, but he was well-known up and down the river for his writing style of accentuating the positive as well as his legendary entertaining and informative columns during nearly a half century.

A two-sport athlete (football and basketball) at St. John's, he began his journalistic career right out of high school working for Greater Wheeling Home Talk and the Martins Ferry Daily Times. He served as Sports Editor for what became The Times Leader until he was called into military service in 1941 during World War II, and upon his return he began a lengthy tenure as head of the Bellaire Bureau of that newspaper.

Although his primary focus shifted to news, he continued to cover sporting events and was a fixture at Nelson Field football games involving both Bellaire and St. John Central under media legends Bill Van Horne and Cal Pokas.

An amateur boxer and a talented softball pitcher, Mountain had a life-long passion for American history. He was a member of Sigma Delta Chi – journalism's honorary fraternity – and received several honors including the first Man of the Year from the Bellaire Lodge 310 Chechoslovak Society of America; the Citizen of the Year from the Bellaire Fraternal Order of Police Associates; and was tabbed an honorary graduate of Bellaire High School and was selected for that school's Wall of Fame. He also served as Clerk of Council for the city of Bellaire. He passed away on July 24, 1988 at the age of 74.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Stan Blankenship (Coach)



Stan Blankenship (Nicholas County High School, Class of 1968). He put together a resume unrivaled by anyone in the girls' basketball coaching ranks, compiling a record of 542-240 during a career that began in 1979 and continued until his retirement in 2011. Those lofty numbers make him the all-time winningest coach in girls' hoops in both the Ohio Valley and the entire state of West Virginia.

Blankenship's Lady Monarchs reached the pinnacle in 1982 when they won the West Virginia Class AAA State Championship with All-American/OVAC Hall of Famer Amy Gamble as the star player.

He also led JMHS to West Virginia Class AAA runner-up finishes in 1992 and 1994. Under his guidance, JMHS won 18 sectional titles and nine regional crowns.

The Lady Monarchs also won nine OVAC championships under Blankenship's watch (1981, '82, '83, '84, '85, '91, '94, 2000, 2002). The five straight titles from 1981-85 marks the longest consecutive string of girls' conference crowns recorded to date.

Blankenship saw significant changes in high school hoops during his coaching career including the institution of the three-point line; the use of a smaller basketball and the move of girls' basketball in West Virginia from fall to winter. He coached an amazing 40 players who went on to play college basketball after graduating from JMHS.

He also coached in the OVAC Samuel A. Mumley All-Star Classic several times and received the OVAC's Richard Saffield Girls' Basketball Coaches Award in 2005.

Blankenship move to the area from Nicholas County where he was a multi-sport standout in high school.

That continued at the collegiate level when he attended West Virginia Wesleyan College, graduating in 1973 after amassing an unheard-of 13 varsity letters (four in track, four in cross country, four in basketball and one in football).

Not surprisingly, he was inducted into the West Virginia Wesleyan Athletic Hall of Fame in 2012.

Tom West (Coach)



Tom West (Mannington High School, Class of 1957). When he made the move to to coach and teach at Valley High, West did so for the long haul.

After four years at Midview High in Grafton, Ohio, he came to Pine Grove where he became a coaching institution, guiding the Lumberjacks' football team for a total of 36 years over two terms – his first from 1971-2000 and then, after a seven-year absence, he returned from 2008-2013.

During his 40 years as a head coach, he amassed a record of 242-176-1, including a 223-151 mark at Valley.

West-coached Valley teams made the West Virginia Class A playoffs 10 straight years from 1991-200 and finished as the state runner-up five times (1993, '94, '95, '96 and '98). His 1993-94-95 teams all went undefeated in the regular season.

The Lumberjacks won OVAC championships in 1995 and '97 and captured the Mason-Dixon Conference crown 11 times (1979, 85, 87, 89, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96 and 97)

West also served as an assistant basketball coach from 1971-83.

The football field at VHS is named Tom West Field in his honor.

West received his bachelor's degree in Education from Fairmont State College in 1961 and his master's degree in Administration from Akron University in 1971.

He began his teaching career in Midview in 1961 where he was an assistant basketball and football coach and then the head football coach from 1967-70 before taking the job at Valley High.

Jay Handlan (Athlete - 1940s)



John "Jay" Handlan (Triadelphia High School, Class of 1946). He earned 12 varsity letters in five sports for the Little Reds during three years — three each in basketball, football and track, two in tennis and one in swimming.

In basketball, the 6-foot-2 forward earned All-City and All-OVAC largest Class AA and was all-state mention. In football, he was a regular end and punter. After high school, he served three years in the U.S. Army before enrolling at Washington & Lee University in Lexington, Va.

Competing for W&L in the Southern Conference — then a major college basketball league which included West Virginia, Duke, Virginia, etc., and others which broke off and formed the Atlantic Coast Conference — he left his mark as one of the all-time most prolific basketball scorers in major college history.

He became only the third major college player to score more than 2,000 career points by capping his 94-game career with 15 points against WVU in his final game to reach 2,002. He averaged 21.6 points for his career.

As a junior, he averaged 26.2 points to nose out WVU All-American Mark Workman for second place nationally. He also led the nation in free throw shooting (86%) and set an NCAA record with 18-for-18 against Virginia. He also scored a school, and Southern Conference, record with 66 points (49 in the first half) — then the third highest-ever major college mark — against Furman. In that game, he took 71 goal attempts (making 30), which remains the oldest Division I NCAA record on the books.

Handlan earned Helms Foundation All-America as a junior and was twice All-Southern Conference. As a senior, he also became a kicker/punter for the football team and was offered a tryout with the Cleveland Browns. He also lettered in track.

He was drafted by the NBA Indianapolis Olympians, but opted to play in the National Industrial Basketball League with the Akron Goodyear Wingfoots. He played four years and was an NIBL All-Star in 1954.

In 2015, he was inducted into the City of Wheeling Hall of Fame.

Dave Linn (Coach)



Dave Linn (Zane Trace High School, Class of 1971). Linn made his mark as the Buckeye Trail High girls' basketball coach for a decade (1976-86), including am amazing four-year run of appearances in the OHSAA State Tournament (1978-81).

Trail's 1978 squad posted a 22-1 overall record, defeating Smithville (41-38) in the Class A state semifinals before falling to Ada (51-39) in the championship game.

The 1979 team reached the pinnacle, defeating Fort Loramie (56-38) in the state semifinals and then downing Holgate (51-32) in the Class A championship game to complete a 23-2 record season.

The Lady Warriors weren't finished, returning to the "Final Four" in 1980 where the beat Portsmouth Clay (59-44) in the semifinals before falling to Mansfield St. Peter's (61-57 in overtime) in the title game for a final 26-1 record; and then making it back to the championship game again in 1981, topping Edgerton (71-58) in the semis and losing another heartbreaker (54-52) to Anna in the finals for a 23-4 final record.

During his 10 years as the Trail girls' coach, he compiled an impressive 211-37 record, an 85 percent victory ratio. Trail also won the OVAC Class A girls' championship in 1984 under Linn.

After some time off, he had a 12-year run as the Trail boys' coach (1999-2010), amassing 119 wins including three or four sectional championships and a district title/regional appearance in 2009. Linn-coached boys' teams won the Pioneer Valley Conference title outright in 2005 and shared the crown with Frontier and Shenandoah in 2010. The 2005 team also won the OVAC Class 2-A crown.

During his career, Linn was selected "Coach of the Year" at various times in the Eastern District and District 12 and he was selected to coach in the OHSBCA North-South All-Star Game in 1982.

A charter member of the East Guernsey/Buckeye Trail Athletic Hall of Fame in 1996, he's served as the District 12 Basketball Coaches Association Secretary/Treasurer and as the Pepsi/District 12 All-Star Game Director for many years. A graduate of Rio Grande College, he was District 12's selection for the Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Honor in 2013 and was inducted into the District 12 Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2015.

Andy Cross (Official)



Andy Cross (Morgantown High School, Class of 1972). One of the more recognizable officials of the Ohio Valley, Cross enjoyed a remarkable career calling the action in baseball, basketball and later in volleyball.

His officiating career began as a student at Bethany College when he decided to follow in the footsteps of his father who had worked football, basketball and baseball games in the Morgantown area, with his young son accompanying him to many of the events.

Cross spent 36 years on the baseball diamond. Among the highlights were 23 regional and 13 state tournament assignments in Ohio and 10 regional and 13 state tournaments in West Virginia. He also umpired the Mizuno All-Star Series in Ohio eight times. The final game of his career came in the 2013 West Virginia State Tournament.

His basketball officiating spanned 31 years. On the Ohio side, he had 13 regional and three state assignments in girls' hoops and seven regional assignments in boys' hoops while in West Virginia, he worked nine regionals and three state tournaments for the girls and 12 regionals and two state tournaments for the boys.

Cross was the 2009 recipient of the OVAC's Robert Dawson Officials Award presented at the OVAC Samuel A. Mumley All-Star Basketball Classic and was honored with the District 12 Basketball Coaches Association "Official of the Year" award in 1997.

In the latter stages of his officiating career, he added volleyball to the mix and worked eight years, including many games at the tournament level in both states.

In addition to his on-field/court work, Cross also served as president, secretary, interpreter and class instructor of the Ohio Valley Board of Baseball Umpires and vice-president and interpreter of the Ohio Valley Board of Basketball Officials. He was also a member of the National Federation of Officials (NFOA) in both West Virginia and Ohio.

Cross was inducted into the OHSAA Officials Hall of Fame in 2010.

Eddie Becker (Athlete - 1950s)



Eddie Becker (Wheeling High School, Class of 1950). A four-year Wildcat basketball player, he was the most highly honored player on two teams which played in West Virginia State Championship games in the large-school Class A. As a junior, the 'Cats finished state runner-up to Fairmont Senior. As a senior, Wheeling capped a 25-0 record season under OVAC Hall of Fame coach Everett Brinkman with the last of five titles and a state finals' win over Elkins, 53-50.

Becker, a two-time All-State Tournament pick, earned first team all-class All-State as a senior as well as All-OVAC largest Class A and All-City honors. He averaged 16.1 points as a junior and led the 'Cats as a senior with more than 20 points a game — rare for that era. He scored 20 or more points seven times with a high of 29 as Wheeling averaged 64 points per game. He also played football.

Recruited by West Virginia U., he left his mark on the WVU record books. The 6-foot forward led the freshman team in scoring with a 25-point gait. The dead-eye jump-shooter lettered three times on the varsity and ended a 75-game career with 1,127 points (15 ppg) — the second most in school history at the time. He averaged 18.7 as a senior when he was team MVP. He also earned All-Southern Conference second team and was selected to the All-SC Tournament team.

At the time he graduated, he was one of 19 players listed on the All-Time WVU Team charts.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Neil Habig (Athlete - 1950s)



Neil Habig (Wheeling Central High School, Class of 1954). An honored high school and college football player, he competed longer in major pro football than any Maroon Knight in history.

As a prep senior, the Martins Ferry native earned first team all-star honors on every eligible selection — All-Valley "Big School", All-OVAC largest Class AA, and the five-school All-City team. Rated the "best defensive end" in OV by coaches who selected All-Valley, the two-way end and punter was the top blocker on a run-oriented team and landed four touchdown passes.

The 6-foot, 190-pounder helped the Maroon Knights win their first-ever OVAC Class AA (largest class at the time) title, with an 8-1 record. The lone loss was 13-7 to 10-0 record Benwood Union, the OVAC Class A champion which finished as the state runner-up.

He earned a scholarship to Purdue University where he played both ways but was converted, on offense, from end to center. A three-year letterman and two-year starter at center-linebacker-defensive end, he was selected as team MVP as a senior on a roster which had 13 Ohio Valley products including OVAC Hall of Fame honorees Nick Mumley and Kenny Mikes.

Habig, a second team All-Big Ten Conference selection, played in the Senior Bowl All-Star game. He was drafted by the Green Bay Packers, but opted for the Canadian Football League.

He played seven seasons (1958-64) as a center-linebacker with the Saskatchewan Roughriders and was a dominant player at his position. He was a CFL All-Star center in 1962, the first year this honor was awarded, and a Western Conference All-Star six times. As a linebacker, he was noted for his pass coverage and had 10 pass interceptions including six in 1963.

Rob Munn (Athlete - 1960s)



Rob Munn (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1966). The three-sport standout helped the Bulldogs record their best combined football/basketball school year in history.

In football, the team captain and quarterback-defensive back led the first perfect record (9-0) in school history. Coached by Joe Ault, the Bulldogs captured the OVAC Class AA title and were ranked No. 5 in the final Ohio Class A poll by United Press International. Bridgeport capped the perfect season with a 22-11 win at rival Martins Ferry for only the third win in 45 series games vs. the Purple Riders.

In basketball, the two-year team captain anchored the school's first-ever unbeaten regular season team (18-0) which captured an OVAC Class AA title and was ranked No. 1 in the Ohio Class A poll by United Press International. Coached by OVAC Hall of Famer Frank Baxter, the Bulldogs scored more than 100 points in five games and won sectional and district crowns before falling to Dalton, 71-70, in the Canton Regional to finish at 24-1.

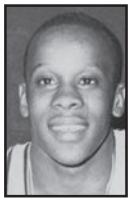
The 6-foot-1, 175-pound forward averaged 24.1 points and 12 rebounds a game as a senior after sporting a 20-point norm as a junior.

The senior was runner-up for Ohio UPI Class A Player of the Year to Kerry Myers of Celina and earned first team All-Ohio from UPI and third team from The Associated Press. He also was twice an All-OVAC selection and an All-District honoree in Eastern Ohio.

Munn was also a pitcher-infielder on the Bulldogs' baseball team.

The 2010 Bridgeport High Hall of Fame inductee earned a basketball scholarship to Marshall University where he was a three-year varsity player after averaging 9.4 points and shooting 46.8 percent from the floor on the freshman team.

Ben Wiley (Athlete - 1960s)



Ben Wiley (Powhatan High School, Class of 1963). He led his team to the school's best-ever basketball season (20-1) and only unbeaten (18-0) regular season in school history.

The 5-foot-9, 150-pound guard was a four-year player who scored nearly 1,500 career points for the Indians. As a senior, he averaged 28.8 points a game and was named Ohio UPI Class A Player of the Year for the team coached by Lou Blumling, later a head coach of the Wheeling Ironmen pro football team. Wiley was a two-time All-OVAC Class A choice and tabbed co-captain as a senior and captain as a junior. The two-time All-District honoree also was a first team All-Ohio choice by both The Associated Press and United Press International as a senior.

In 1963, the Indians shared the OVAC Class A crown with Paden City and ended with a 20-1 record after bowing to Strasburg, 73-61 in the Class A District Tournament.

In baseball, he was a senior regular on the second Indians' team to win an Ohio title. The Indians advanced to the regional tournament all four years (1960-63) during Wiley's career. The 1963 team, coached by Frank Bland, capped a 15-2 record season by winning the Ohio Class A crown with a 3-0 championship game win over Dublin after downing Spencerville, 2-1, in the semifinals.

Wiley, a senior class president and honor student, attended Gannon College in Erie, Pa., and played basketball for four years. The playmaker averaged 10.6 points as a senior with a high game of 28 points. He scored 896 points in his career and was inducted into the Gannon Sports Hall of Fame in 1986.

After graduation, he remained in the Erie area and became a civic leader who was recognized multiple times including the naming of a public building after him. He died in 2004.

Jim Wood (Athlete - 1970s)



Jim Wood (Steubenville Catholic Central High School, Class of 1973). This Crusader was one of the most dominant basketball big men in the OVAC during the early 1970s. The talented 6-foot, 9-inch post help to carry Catholic Central to its first OVAC hoop crown, turning the trick in 1973 in Class AAA — the largest classification at that time. The Crusaders went 22-2 that season, winning sectional and district titles along the way.

He averaged 20 points and 15 rebounds a game as a senior. Those numbers, combined with the team's success, earned him first-team all-Ohio UPI and second-team AP all-state accolades to go with all-Eastern District plaudits.

He was named first-team all-OVAC as a junior and senior, named a co-captain in 1973. In addition, one Florida newspaper tabbed him as honorable mention All-American as a senior.

Wood was also a two-year letterman in baseball for Catholic Central.

His superb hardwood exploits earned him a scholarship to Georgia Tech, where he became a four-year regular at center and was the team's leading scorer his first three years (11.1, 15.0 and 14.7) and second on the team as a senior (14.1). He also led the team in rebounds two years. His career totals included 1,459 points and 740 rebounds.

Wood was inducted into the Georgia Tech Hall of Fame in 1985, just eight years after earning his degree from the school. After his collegiate career, Wood played basketball in South America for 12 years.

The Steubenville Catholic Central Hall of Famer still resides in the Ohio Valley and is an OVAC basketball official.

Jim Woofter (Athlete - 1970s)



Jim Woofter (Oak Glen High School, Class of 1973). He earned the honor of becoming the first Golden Bear athlete to attain All-American honors, earning those plaudits for his grid greatness at linebacker, center and fullback.

The 6-2, 225-pounder was a two-time first-team all-state, all-OVAC and all-Valley honoree. As a senior, he was captain of the all-Valley "Big School" defensive team and runner-up for the Hunt Award, emblematic of the state's top lineman.

As a senior, he recorded 126 tackles, 49 assists, five fumble recoveries and forced six fumbles in helping the Golden Bears to a 7-3 record. The tenacious defender registered 86 solo tackles, 46 assists, eight tackles for losses, three fumble recoveries and four interceptions as a junior.

Woofter's sparkling football exploits earned him All-American honors from *Coach & Athlete* and *Scholastic Coach* magazines.

His prep football success attracted recruiters from all the major schools, and Woofter opted for the University of Tennessee. It proved to be a good choice as he was a three-year letterman and two-year starter at defensive tackle for the Volunteers.

His athletic success was not limited to just the gridiron. As a senior, he was state shot put champion at Oak Glen with a 52-foot, 7-inch effort, and he also won the OVAC Class AAA shot put crown. Woofter was also a force in wrestling. He was the OVAC runner-up at heavyweight as a senior.

Kim Augur (Athlete - 1980s)



Kim Augur (East Liverpool High School, Class of 1983). Her most impressive claim to fame is winning the OHSAA Class AAA 400-meter dash state championship as a senior in 54.87 seconds. She missed the state record by a mere one-tenth of a second. Later on in that same state meet, Augur claimed the silver medal in the 200-meter dash (25.18).

This Potter track great still holds the Ohio Valley record in the 400 meters at 54.87. She also established school records in the 100 (12.3) and 200 (24.56), the latter still ranking as the second-best in valley history behind the 24.22 turned in years later Bridgeport's Brittany Hocker, also an OVAC Hall of Famer.

Augur is also a member of the Potters' school-record 4x400-meter relay team which turned in a 4:11.1 clocking during her junior campaign.

Her achievements earned her a track scholarship to The Ohio State University.

Augur was no one-sport wonder. She was also a talented basketball player for East Liverpool, earning first-team all-OVAC honors as a junior and senior.

Augur was inducted into the East Liverpool High Athletic Hall of Fame in 1990.

Dave Delande (Athlete - 1980s)



Dave Delande (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 1982). This wrestling great distinguished himself both on the prep and collegiate levels.

His Red Devils' mat career was nothing short of sensational. He finished with a stellar 136-10-1 record. In the process, Delande was a three-time OVAC champion. He was also the runner-up as a freshman.

Delande was also a runner-up at the OHSAA State Wrestling Championships as 132-pound junior and he placed fifth at 138 pounds as a senior.

He continued his wrestling greatness at West Liberty under the nurturing of legendary coach Vince Monseau.

Delande was a three-time NAIA All-American for the Hilltoppers, achieving the feat in three different weight divisions. He was seventh at 142, fourth at 150 and national runner-up at 158.

His four-year WL record was a sparkling 96-23.

He still ranks in the top 10 in eight Hilltopper all-time mat records: falls, shutouts, 2-point near falls, 3-point near falls, reversals, team points, wins and best winning percentage.

Just as impressively, Delande also was the Hilltopper wrestling program's first Academic All-American, earning back-to-back academic laurels in 1985 and 1986. He was also three-time team captain.

He was inducted into the West Liberty University Athletic Hall of Fame in 2010. After gaining his West Liberty diploma, he became a CPA.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Jodi Bates (Athlete - 1990s)



Jodi Bates (Meadowbrook High School, Class of 1999). Speed to burn. That's exactly what this former Colt possessed as it pertained to track and field.

A standout sprinter for the Colts, Bates shined in the 100- and 200-meter dashes, winning 10 state medals during her career.

Bates burst onto scene in a big way as a freshman, placing second in both the 100 (12.32) and 200 (25.12) at the Division II state meet. She didn't slow down from there.

As a sophomore, Bates won her first state championship, blazing the Ohio Stadium track to a 24.87 to capture the 200-meter dash. She also finished second in the 100 (12.37) for the second straight season.

Bates broke through and climbed to the top of the state podium in the 100-meter dash as a junior. It was one of four medals she claimed in that meet. She won the 100 in 12.22, finished second in the 200 (25.25) and ran a leg on the fifth-place 4x100 (50.81) and eighth place 4x400 squads.

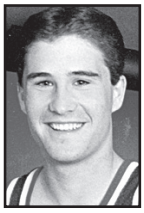
During her senior campaign, Bates ran consistently under the coveted 12-second barrier. She successfully defended her 100-meter title (12.10) and anchored the fifth-place 4x100 (50.33) during the first state meet at Dayton's Welcome Stadium.

En route to the state competition, Bates won 14 OVAC championships, including four straight 100- and 200-meter titles. She also claimed 12 district and 10 regional championships during her career, while running a personal best time of 11.95, which still stands as Meadowbrook's all-time best and is the second-best in Ohio Valley history.

After her prep career, Bates signed to run at Wheeling Jesuit University. She competed just one season before developing an injury, which proved to be career ending. She attempted a comeback after transferring to Muskingum University, but the injury was simply too much to overcome.

While on the track is where Bates made her mark, she also lettered twice in basketball and was an honorable mention all-league selection.

Matt Powell (Athlete - 1990s)



Matt Powell (Barnesville High School, Class of 1990). This former Shamrocks didn't just score the ball, he filled it up every night during an impressive four-year career with 2,174 career points (still in the top 30 all-time in Ohio).

Powell helped lead the Shamrocks to their first trip to the Ohio Sweet 16 during his senior season in which he scored 32 points per game en route to first-team all-Ohio accolades by both The Associated Press and United Press International.

UPI selected him as its Division III state player of the year, a worthy honor when you consider he scored 760 points that season, connected on 60, three-point goals and was 168-of-203 from the foul line. That senior-year explosion followed a junior season in which he scored 621 points and his 46 "treys".

Powell made an immediate impact for the Shamrocks. He scored 282 points as a freshman and then really took off, pouring in 510 points as a sophomore.

His presence is still felt at Barnesville. He owns three of the top four point totals ever recorded at Barnesville. His single-game high of 45 ranked third and his 60 bonus baskets rank second all-time. Powell's career points and free throws made (411) are school records.

Along with being recognized as all-Ohio, Powell played in both the OVAC and the Ohio North-South All-Star Games. He was the captain of the all-OVAC Class AAA team, Eastern District Player of the Year, District 12 Player of the Year and captained the all-Valley Big School team. He was selected to the District 12 Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2010.

After his prep career, Powell originally went to the Air Force Academy, but transferred back to Rio Grande College and etched his name into its lore.

He scored 2,367 career points at the college level, which is second in Rio Grande history to only Bevo Francis. He led Rio Grande to the NAIA National Tournament in Tulsa, Oklahoma during his senior season. He was a three-time all-Mid Ohio Conference selection, a two-time all-District 22 honoree and a NAIA All-American Honorable Mention choice after the 1992-93 campaign. As a senior at Rio Grande, Powell, who battled a foot injury during his junior campaign, scored 705 points and served as a co-captain.

Zach Amedro (Athlete - 2000s)



Zach Amedro (John Marshall High School, Class of 2005). The Ohio Valley has produced several prolific passers in its history. This former Monarch is near the top in every passing category there is.

As a senior, Amedro finished fourth in the balloting for the Kennedy Award and was a first-team all-state selection after putting forth one of the most prolific statistical seasons in history. He completed 188-of-289 passes for 2,939 yards and 33 touchdowns. He also ran for six touchdowns.

That completed a brilliant three-year stint as quarterback in which he threw for more than 6,000 yards and 53 touchdowns. He completed 426-of-761 career passes.

Along with his state-wide honors, Amedro was named All-OVAC and was the offensive captain of The Intelligencer's All-Valley team. In 2002, he was the newspaper's "Sophomore of the Year."

After originally attending then FCS member Appalachian State, Amedro transferred back to the Ohio Valley and had a remarkable career at West Liberty where he twice finished as runner-up for the Harlan Hill Award, which is the Division II equivalent to the Heisman Trophy.

Amedro set Division II passing records for yards (14,733) and completions (1,079). His thirty 300-yard passing games were also the best in Division II history.

In leading the Hilltoppers to the NCAA Division II playoffs as a senior, Amedro finished 329-of-485 for 4,058 yards and 38 touchdowns in 10 games. He had a season-high eight touchdowns and 44 completions.

During Amedro's junior season, the Hilltoppers won the WVIAC title and qualified for the playoffs, avenging their only loss with a wild 84-63 victory against Edinboro.

Amedro was twice named WVIAC "Player of the Year" and was a first-team Division II All-American and second-team Small College All-American by The Associated Press.

Kacie Vavrek (Athlete - 2000s)



Kacie Vavrek (Bellaire High School, Class of 2002). You name the sport and this former Big Red shined brightly.

A four-year letterman in three sports, Vavrek left her biggest marks on the basketball court and on the track.

In basketball, Vavrek scored in bunches. She finished her prep career with 1,631 points, which at the time of her graduation was tops amongst Bellaire females. It's since been broken by her sister, Ashley.

During her senior season, Vavrek led the area in scoring at 23.9 points a game. She was named first-team All-Ohio, All-District 12, All-OVAC, Eastern District "Player of the Year" and finished fourth in the voting for Ohio's Ms. Basketball.

Vavrek took part in both the Ohio North-South Game and the OVAC All-Star Game. She led the South squad with 20 points in that contest.

As a junior, Vavrek scored at an OV-best 22.7 points per game clip. She was named first-team All-Ohio, All-Eastern District, All-District 12, All-OVAC and captained the All-Valley team.

On the track, Vavrek was one of the area's all-time best high hurdlers and high jumpers. Vavrek finished her prep career with 10 state medals. Taking that a step further, she won a trio of state championships.

After reaching the state final in the highs as a freshman and sophomore to come up short, Vavrek broke through as a junior by winning the state title. She was fourth in the low hurdles and fifth in the high jump that season as well.

As a senior, Vavrek went double-gold. She defended her high hurdle title and added the lows, which was an event she didn't compete in often early in her career. She was a four-time placer in the high jump. Vavrek's personal-best time of 14.53 had been the valley's all-time best.

Along with her state success, Vavrek was a four-time OVAC high hurdle champion. All told, she won or played a role in 11 conference track titles and helped the Big Reds claim two team crowns.

Vavrek was also a standout in volleyball. She was chosen as All-OVAC and played in both the District 12 and OVAC All-Star Games.

Vavrek was named the Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club's Female Athlete of the Year for 2002.

With opportunities to run track or play hoops, Vavrek elected to continue her roundball career at Kent State University. She was a four-year player for the Flashes and started in 22 games during her career.

OVAC Hall of Fame lapel pins courtesy of

Dr. Nick Trombetta

Former Superintendent of Midland Borough School District
Executive Administrator of Western Pennsylvania Charter Cyber Schwwool, Midland, Pa.

"As a former OVAC coach, I am aware of the unique role that this conference plays in the lives of the member schools' student-athletes. Your demonstrated emphasis on sportsmanwhip and scholarship are a tribute to your dedicated leadership and is rivaled by no other high school organization of which I am aware. The OVAC Hall of Fame is providing an opportunity to recognize and honor individuals whose accomplishments continue to inspire and motivate today's athletes. It is both my honor and extreme pleasure to play a small part in your continuing success."

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Class of 2017

OVAC Hall of Fame

Sponsored by Robinson Auto Group

Ross Stoltz (OVAC Contributor)



Ross Stoltz (Naponee High School (Nebraska), Class of 1965). He has been a true friend and supporter of the conference, most evident as the sponsor of the popular OVAC McDonald's All-Star Band which entertains the crowd during pregame and halftime at the annual OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game each July. The band features some of the best musicians from schools throughout the conference who come together for a week prior to the game and never disappoint with a spectacular performance.

Under Stoltz' leadership, McDonald's also is a sponsor of the OVAC Kick-Off Classic; the West Virginia "Super Six" State Football Championships which have become a fixture at Wheeling Island Stadium; and has a strong local involvement with many area schools including band sponsorships, stadium banners, scoreboards and yearbooks as well as donating to area track meets and baseball events.

McDonald's is also a yearly sponsor of the highly-regarded "Beast of the East" suwmmer baseball tournament which has become a summertime staple in the Ohio Valley; a major sponsor of the area's professional hockey team – the Wheeling Nailers; an donates annually to the local YMCA.

Stoltz personally presents local nominations to athletes for the prestigious McDonald's High School All-American Classic.

He began his career with McDonald's in 1965 as a 17-year old crew member. After serving in the U.S. Army (1967-70) and attending the University of Nebraska (Class of 1973), he returned to McDonald's in various capacities starting in 1974 and since 1996 has been the Owner/Operator of 10 McDonald's restaurants throughout the Ohio Valley (Barnesville, Belmont, Elm Grove, Martins Ferry, Moundsville, St.Clairsville, Triadelphia, Warwood and Woodsfield).

Stoltz has received the Golden Arch Award, the McDonald's Corporation's highest recognition for an Owner/Operator that recognizes a focus on customer service, outstanding food quality and restaurant operations, and exceptional contributions to the local community.

He's a board member of the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Morgantown; a longtime sponsor for McDonald's MAC Grants for Teachers program; and provides extensive support to local schools.

Dave Caldwell (Coaches)



Dave Caldwell (Beallsville High School, Class of 1973). He proved the theory of "the little engine that could" by achieving a tremendous amount of success coaching football and one of the smallest schools around, compiling a record of 196-102-1 during his 29 years as head coach of his alma mater.

Caldwell began his coaching career as an assistant at Caldwell High under Mike Devol and then returned "home" to Beallsville where he assisted J.B. Majors for two seasons (1981-82) . He was elevated to the head coaching post in 1993 and held that job until retiring in 2011.

Under Caldwell's guidance, the Blue Devils won six Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Class A championships (1988, 1992, 1994, 2000, 2006 and 2011) and six Pioneer Valley Conference titles. Beallsville reached the OHSAA playoffs eight times (1994, 1999, 2000, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2001) and posted a playoff record of 5-8. That included a run to the Division VI, Region 23 championship and a spot in the state semifinals in 1994 and a career-capping 10-3 season in 2011 when BHS advanced to the D-VI, Region 23 title contest.

Caldwell was tabbed "Coach of the Year" in the Eastern District and PVC multiple times and he coached in the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game five times (1989, 1993, 2001, 2005 and 2009) with a 2-3 record in the mid-summer classic.

Caldwell, who made a brief coaching return as an assistant at Shenandoah in 2014, also assisted in basketball and track during his time at Beallsville.

As an athlete, he was a three-sport performer at Beallsville High School (football, basketball and track), playing on the school's first unbeaten football team in 1972. He went on to play football for four years at Muskingum College, earning his degree there in 1977 and later obtaining a master's degree from Salem University.

Arthur 'Butch' Joseph (OVAC Family)



Arthur "Butch" Joseph (Bellaire High School, Class of 1963). When the conference needs to keep things "running" in the fall or the spring, Joseph has been the go-to guy for many years as a member of the OVAC Track and Cross Country committees, serving as co-chairman of the track committee with his wife, Donna, an OVAC Hall of Fame inductee in 2007.

A veteran of the United States Air Force who served during the Vietnam War, he started officiating local track meets in the early 1970s and began his association with the OVAC in the late 1980s, assisting Floyd Deaton with the OVAC Volleyball Championships and being responsible for compiling the weekly conference standings in that sport.

Joseph has been an integral part of the OVAC Cal Giffin Track Championships dating back to the days when the small school divisions were contested at Shadyside's Fleming Field, and he also assisted with the big school meets at Bellaire's Nelson Field either behind the scenes or as an on-track official.

It was Joseph's vision to convert the OVAC Track Championships to their current format. It was his desire to have the best athletes, regardless of class, compete against one-another in an overall championship meet, which is how the event has been contested since 2010 at St. Clairsville High.

Joseph has also been the man behind the computer responsible for the pre-event preparation and timing/scoring 'at the OVAC Cal Pokas Cross Country Championships on the campus of Meadowbrook High School in Byesville for more than 15 years.

Along with his wife, Joseph received the OVAC Cal Giffin Track Service award in 1997.

Jeff Harrison (Media)



Jeff Harrison (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1977). He has been a member of the sports media for 35 years and counting, including the last 17 at The Daily Jeffersonian in Cambridge where he has been the Sports Editor since 2007. Prior to that, he spent 18 years at The Times Leader in Martins Ferry.

He originated the concept of the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Hall of Fame in 2004; is a member of the selection committee and in charge of producing the program for that event. He's also a member of the OVAC Softball Committee and OVAC Coach of the Year Selection Committee and previously handled publicity for the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game for seven years.

Harrison was also the catalyst behind the formation of the District 12 Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2008, serving as Chairman of the Hall of Fame Selection Committee and handling publicity since that time; and is a member of the Martins Ferry High School Athletic Hall of Fame Committee, serving as the primary researcher/biographer for that group.

He is a member of The Associated Press East District Selection Committee for football/boys' basketball/girls' basketball, serving as chairman since 2009; an AP state poll voter; a member of the Ohio High School Athletic Association Media Advisory Committee and a member of the Ohio Prep Sportswriters Association. He was the 2006 recipient of the Eastern Ohio Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association's Media Award ; District 12's selection for the Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Honor in 2015 and has won several OPSWA writing contest awards.

Harrison, who attended Ohio University Eastern and currently resides in Byesville, authored the book Holding Court: The Gene Ford Story (2005), the biography of the legendary Cambridge High School boys' basketball coach.

He also served as public address announcer at several venues over the years, including Martins Ferry football and boys' basketball, Meadowbrook girls' basketball and the District 12 All-Star Basketball Classic; and was a youth baseball/softball coach for 22 years in the Martins Ferry Civics Athletic Association and the Guernsey Valley Baseball Association.

Terry Leggett (Coaches)



Terry Leggett (Midvale High School, Class of 1965). The ultra-successful Leggett began his coaching career as an assistant at Skyvue High School and then was head coach there for two seasons (1973-74 and '74-75).

He went to old Zane Trace High School for the next two years ('75-76 and '76-77) and when that school consolidated with Madison High to become Buckeye Trail, Leggett was named the school's first coach.

His initial Warrior squad (1977-78) accomplished a remarkable feat, posting a perfect 18-0 regular season (21-1 overall) and winning the OVAC Class A championship, sectional and district titles and finishing runner-up in the regional, losing a 43-42 heartbreaker to Indian Valley South.

During his 12 years at Trail (he called it quits following the 1988-89 season), the Warriors never had a losing season and amassed an incredible 225-50 record. That included two trips to the OHSAA Class A "Final Four" -- his 1982-83 team went 25-1 and the 1986-86 team turned things around after a 4-5 start to make the state semifinals and finish 20-7.

Leggett-coached Trail teams won nine sectional titles, five district crowns and two regional championships and he was named UPI Class A Ohio "Co-Coach of the Year" in 1983. His teams won OVAC titles four straight years ('78, '79, '80 and '81) and were state-ranked six times. He was named overall OVAC "Coach of the Year" in 1978 and was also a four-time District 12 "Coach of the Year" honoree. All told, his teams compiled a 268-92 record in 16 seasons.

He coached in the OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic three times and was an assistant coach in the Ohio North-South All-Star Game once.

A graduate of Findlay College, he served as an Eastern District Board member and was the Game Director of the District 12 Basketball All-Star Game for many years. He also served on the Rules Interpretation Committee of the OHSAA.

Inducted into the school's Athletic Hall of Fame in 1997, Leggett was also a physical education teacher and athletic director during his days at Buckeye Trail. He passed away in 2009.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Roger Sowers (Official)



Roger Sowers (Roseville High School, Class of 1952). He spent a number of years in various roles – coach, athletic director, guidance counselor, principal and instructor – but Sowers is probably best known as a long-time basketball official.

Sowers, who spent more than 30 years in education, began as a basketball coach, serving four years as head coach at Pleasant City High and seven years at Barnesville High, posting a combined 130-99 record.

He officiated his first varsity basketball game in 1959, and became a full-time referee in 1968 once his coaching days were over. He worked 40 years over five decades, including nearly a quarter of a century as a tournament official at the sectional, district and regional levels.

He was a charter member of the East Central Ohio Officials Association in the Cambridge area, serving as president, rules interpreter and on the executive board over the years. He also served as president of the Ohio Association of Basketball Officials.

Sowers, who also officiated at the college level in the Ohio Athletic Conference, spent 20-plus years teaching a basketball officiating course at Ohio University Eastern, with several of his former students later becoming high school and college officials.

He was inducted into the Ohio High School Athletic Association's Officials Hall of Fame in 1995; received a Distinguished Service Award from the District 12 Basketball Coaches Association and a Meritorious Award from the OHSAA in 1998 for 40 years of service. The Roger Sowers Memorial Scholarship was established by his family in 2000, with the yearly recipient a Barnesville High senior planning to attend Ohio University Eastern and major in education.

A Crooksville native, he earned a bachelor's degree from Marietta College where he was a four-year letterman in baseball and a one-year letterman in basketball, and obtained his master's degree from West Virginia University.

He passed away in 1998 at the age of 64.

Bill Gompers (1940s Athlete)



Bill Gompers (Wheeling Central High School, Class of 1945).He was an honored running back on two top Maroon Knight football teams and also lettered on two state Catholic Tournament championship basketball teams.

A two-time selection on the five-team All-City football honor roll, the two-way standout helped Central win the 1943 City Championship with a 9-1 regular season record before the Knights competed in a post-season Steel Bowl contest won, 20-19 by Rochester.

As a senior in the first year of OVAC competition, he was team co-captain on a 6-3-1 record Knight squad.

In basketball, Gompers competed on two teams which extended the Knights' streak to five consecutive W.Va. Catholic Tournament championships.The 1944 team went 22-3 in regular season and Catholic Tournament play before the Knights won two of three games in the Eastern States Catholic Tournament. That team was coached by charter OVAC Hall of Fame coach Jim Foti.

Both Gompers and Foti were among inductees into the charter Wheeling Central High School Sports Hall of Fame.

During Gompers' senior season, the 6-foot-1, 180-pound back was offered football scholarships at several colleges but opted for Notre Dame where he lettered for three seasons and played both ways on two Irish teams proclaimed as National Champions - 1946 (8-0-1 record) and 1947 (9-0), which was led by Heisman Trophy winner Johnny Lujack. Gompers, cited as a top blocker, averaged 6.8 yards a carry. He played in the 1946 scoreless tie vs. Army which was labeled the "Game of the Century."

Gompers was selected to play on the College All-Star team which played the NFL champions, the Chicago Cardinals, in a post-season game.

Drafted by the Buffalo Bills of the pro All-American Football Conference, he played both ways for one season as the team bowed to the Cleveland Browns in the championship game.

Tom Franckhauser (1950s Athlete)



Tom "Knute" Franckhauser (Steubenville Catholic Central High School, Class of 1955).The 6-foot, 195-pound offensive end-defensive back was the leading scorer as a senior on a 9-1 record Crusader team, the school's best record since 1946. He landed nine touchdown passes - high for that era - and returned three pass interceptions for scores. His best output was in a 45-6 win over Wellsville when he scored on an 81-yard TD reception and returned two interceptions for 57- and 69-yard scores.

An All-Valley and All-Eastern Ohio honoree, he competed in the Ohio-W.Va. All-Star game won by Ohio, 31-20.

He accepted a scholarship to Purdue University where he lettered three years and started as a junior and senior as the team's leading pass receiver. He was named team MVP as a senior. He helped the Boilermakers upset the nation's No. 1 ranked team, Michigan State, in 1957. A second team All-Big Ten honoree as a senior, he played in 17 career games with 30 receptions for 611 yards and four TDs.

He was the 33rd overall selection in the 1959 NFL Draft third round by the Los Angeles Rams. In his rookie season, the cornerback had three interceptions.

In 1960, he was selected by the Dallas Cowboys in the NFL Expansion Draft and became the first Cowboy to carry the ball by returning the opening kickoff in the inaugural regular season game.

After two years with the Cowboys, he capped his five-year, 58-game pro career with a two-year stint on the Minnesota Vikings. He was forced to retire in 1964 after suffering a brain injury during a tackle in a training camp scrimmage. He had 13 career interceptions.

A first cousin of OVAC Hall of Famer Danny Abramowicz, he passed away in 1997.

William 'Catfish' Hearst (1950s Athlete)



William "Catfish" Hearst (Wellsburg High School, Class of 1959).The first sprinter in the Ohio Valley and W. Va. to break the 50-second barrier at 440 yards, he was dominant at the quarter mile, which he didn't start running until his junior season, and 220 yards while also competitive in the 100 and long jump.

As a senior, he was unbeaten in the 440 with wins at the W.Va. Regional and state meets--a repeat title—the one-class OVAC meet where he was top scorer, the Bellaire, Toronto, Wellsburg and Mansfield Relays, and was one of only two Ohio Valley athletes to ever win an individual event at the most prestigious Midwest invitational meet. His 49.6 mark at Bellaire was the first Ohio Valley sub-50-second clocking, and he time and all-time best 49.1 at the W.Va. regional meet. At the one-class state meet, he repeated as 440 champion with a record 49.5 mark and also won the 220 with a record-tying 22.1 time. As a junior, he won the state 440 in 50.05 seconds.

He was high scorer at the Bellaire Relays event featuring athletes from three states and won by a Paul Warfield-led Warren Harding team. Hearst won the 100 (10.0), was second in the 220 and won the 440 (49.6) with two meet records.

A two-time All-Valley Track honoree at 100, 220 and 440, the Wellsburg Express was selected captain as a senior and noted as "the greatest quarter-miler produced in these parts.".

Hearst also was a four-year football and three-year basketball player and competed in the 1959 W.Va.-Ohio All-Star football game won by W.Va., 7-6.

He attended W. Va. State and also served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. After returning home, he was a long-time coach of the Ohio Valley Track Club, a certified track official and helped coach at Bethany College. An annual Memorial Scholarship in his name is presented each year at Brooke High.

Hearst passed away in 2002.

Roger Alford (1960s Athlete)



Roger Alford (Wintersville High School, Class of 1962). He was a racial pioneer at West Virginia University and the Southern Conference after a three-sport career at old Wintersville High.

Alford competed in football, basketball and track for the Golden Warriors and was labeled by Hall of Fame coach Bob Kettlewell as "one of the two best football players I coached" along with OVAC Hall of Famer Alan Jack, who later starred at Ohio State University.

In football, the 5-foot-10, 225-pound tackle was All-OVAC Class AA, All-Valley "Big School" first team, and All-Eastern Ohio first team all-class selection.

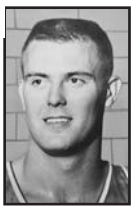
The Mountaineers broke the "color barrier" in 1962 when they recruited Alford and fullback Dick Leftridge of Hinton, W.Va., the first African-Americans to wear a WVU football uniform. After playing on the freshman team, Alford lettered three varsity seasons and started the last two as an offensive guard. He was named to the 1960-69 All-Decade Team at WVU.

In 1999, he was inducted postumously into the WVU Sports Hall of Fame.

He was the fourth Alford brother to attend college and play football. His brother Bob co-captained the Kent State team in 1961. Roger earned four degrees from WVU. completing his studies for bachelor's, master's, physical therapy and dental degrees. He was a dentist in Detroit when he died in 1996.

Alford was a starter in at least three memorable WVU games - the 63-48 win over Pitt in 1965; the 28-27 upset win over No. 9 Syracuse in 1964; and the 1964 indoor Liberty Bowl game vs. Utah in Atlantic City.

Dick Tomlinson (1960s Athlete)



Dick Tomlinson (Wheeling High School, Class of 1961). He was a 6-foot-5, 210-pound three-sport standout who was a rare two-year "Big" all-class, first team All-State basketball honoree; state and OVAC track star with rare combination (shot put champion and top placer in 100-yard sprint); and football quarterback. He earned a basketball scholarship to the University of Florida and set a school game point record.

At old Wheeling High, he competed in basketball, football and track for three years and also golf as a senior.

In basketball, besides being a two-time "Big" all-class and Class AAA all-stater, he was twice captain of both the OVAC largest Class AAA and the five-school All-City honor rolls. He averaged 23 points a game both as a junior and senior - the top marks in the city and OVAC Class AAA. As a senior and team captain, he led the Wildcats to sectional and regional titles and into the state tournament before bowing to Beckley Woodrow Wilson in the Class AAA semifinals. He earned All-Tournament honors.

In track, the senior team captain won the state one-class shot put (51-4 1/2) and placed 4th in the 100-yard dash, He was second in the shot put as a junior.

Tomlinson was All-Valley both in sprints and weights. At the OVAC meet, he won the shot put (51-5 3/8) and placed second in the 100 and third at 220 yards.

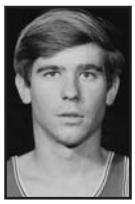
In football, the rangy quarterback was team co-captain and team MVP as a senior. He earned All-City two years and was selected captain as a senior. He rated mention on the All-OVAC and All-State Class AAA two years. As a senior, he led the Wildcats to their fourth straight City title and 6-3-1 record including an 18-14 upset of eventual state Class AAA champion Weir, the only loss for the Red Riders led by Kennedy Award winner and OVAC Hall of Famer Bob Kelley.

At the University of Florida, after playing on the freshman basketball team, he started three varsity seasons and played in 72 games with 863 points and 529 rebounds while shooting 49.2% from the floor and 73.2% at the line.

As a junior, he set Gator school records with 44 points including 19 goals in a win over Tampa. The 44-points currently ranks No. 2 all-time in school history. As a senior, he averaged 12.9 points and 7.1 rebounds.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Gary Repella (1970s Athlete)



Gary Repella (Steubenville High School, Class of 1970). He enjoyed stellar careers in basketball, baseball and football for the Big Red.

It was in hoops that led to a collegiate scholarship as Ohio State coaching legend Fred Taylor inked the talented 6-3 guard, one year after landing St. John Central star Allan Hornyak.

Repella helped lead Steubenville to a 23-1 mark as a senior as Big Red, under Hall of Fame Coach Chuck Watt, claimed the OVAC Class AAA championship. He averaged 18.1 points per game in becoming the district player-of-the-year while being named first-team All-Ohio.

Repella was a two-time All-Valley "Big School" and All-OVAC honoree. He scored in double figures in every game as a senior for the well-balanced Big Red. He averaged 15 points per game as a junior.

He was also a gem on the diamond, starting for three seasons. The slick-fielding second baseman helped Steubenville win the OVAC title in his senior season of 1968 with a 22-7-1 mark.

In his final campaign, he batted .357 on the strength of 35 hits while being named first-team All-Valley. There was no All-OVAC team at that time.

Repella was selected to play in the Ohio All-Star Game in Columbus, which also signified All-State honors. He was also a key performer for the Steubenville Legion team which earned a berth in the state tournament in Athens.

Repella was a two-year starter in football at Steubenville. As a senior, he directed the ground-oriented Big Red to a 7-2-1 record, tying powerhouse Massillon. He completed 30-of-64 passes for 517 yards and five TDs that fall.

After graduating from Steubenville High, Repella took his versatile talents to Columbus to play basketball at OSU.

The NCAA had a rule in place prohibiting freshmen to play on the varsity squad, but Repella made the most of his time with the Buckeyes' frosh, leading the team with a 19.2 scoring average. A back injury slowed his sophomore campaign when he started two games and played in 15. He tallied 10 points in his first start that season against Butler. As a junior, he served as a backup to Hornyak, a three-time first-team All-Big Ten honoree.

Repella became a full-time starter as a senior, and he was second on the team with 59 assists while averaging 7.6 points a game, with a high game of 19 points. He played in 23 of 24 games and started 19 as a two-guard.

He still resides in Steubenville, serving the city for many years as law director. His daughter, Liz, was a 2,000-point hoop scorer for Big Red before starring at WVU.

Chris Jones (1980s Athlete)



Chris Jones (John Marshall High School, Class of 1982). Bob Montgomery has authored a legendary career as the longtime head baseball coach at John Marshall. In his four-plus decades at the Monarch helm, he has garnered nearly 900 wins, so when he says Chris Jones is the "best high school player I've coached," it has impact. The talented righthander, who also yielded a potent bat, has the stats to back up that statement.

In his three years on the Monarchs' mound, Jones recorded an amazing 30-3 pitching mark. Two of his setbacks were shutout defeats. He helped JM capture three successive OVAC 4A titles (1980-82) while compiling a brilliant 84-15-1 record.

Jones started his JM career on a high note, compiling a 9-0 pitching mark as a sophomore as Montgomery's charges won an amazing 31 of 33 starts. Jones was accorded second-team all-Valley's honors that spring.

He raised his level of play even more as a junior, dazzling both as a hurler and a hitter as JM compiled a stellar 25-4 mark. At the plate, Jones led the valley with a smoking .500 batting average, going 46-of-92 with eight doubles, six triples, three homers and 31 RBI while scoring 26 runs. As a pitcher, he won 10 of 11 decisions, striking out 122 in 78 innings of work. He had a miniscule 1.62 ERA while walking just 31 batters. He earned first-team, all-state, all-Valley and all-OVAC plaudits that spring.

Jones was just as dominating as a senior, helping JM garner a 28-9-1 record. He struck out 171 batters in 97 innings of work. He was 11-2 on the mound with a 1.61 ERA. He batted .393 with 44 hits and an Ohio Valley-leading eight home runs. He knocked in 37 runs and scored 32 more. He blasted six triples and two doubles. He was named co-captain of the all-Valley team while also being named first-team all-West Virginia, all-OVAC and all-Mountaineer League.

Jones also sparkled on the gridiron as a senior, earning honorable mention all-OVAC honors as a defensive back.

The Ohio State University won the recruiting battle for the talented Monarch. Jones was in the Buckeyes' starting rotation as a sophomore and junior, going 8-8 with 134 strikeouts. The Toronto Blue Jays drafted him in the fourth round after his junior year. He pitched sevens seasons in the minors, reaching the Class AAA level.

Scot Maffe (1980s Athlete)



Scot Maffe (Bellaire High School, Class of 1985). Be it football, basketball or baseball, Maffe delivered in quality fashion for the Big Reds.

Although equally productive in all three sports, baseball was his linchpin. After his stellar Big Reds' diamond career, he matriculated to Ohio University where he played baseball three years for the Athens-based Bobcats, lettering twice.

Maffe was a four-year letterwinner in baseball at Bellaire, earning a myriad of honors after establishing a host of school records. When he completed his Big Reds' career, he owned the following baseball records: season at-bats (105), career singles (85), doubles in a game (3), triples in a game (2), RBI in a game (6), career runs (95), stolen bases in a game (4), season (33) and career (55); innings pitched season (76), career (202) and pitching wins season (12), career (26).

He was a first-team all-OVAC, all-District and all-Valley honoree in all three sports as a senior. He was also selected to play in all three OVAC All-Star games.

Maffe was a two-year starter at quarterback for Coach John Magistro in football. He was special mention all-Ohio as a senior along with first team all-Eastern District and all-OVAC He was also the Big Reds' captain.

Maffe was a slick and savvy point guard for Coach Gene Ammirante on the hardwood, earning honorable mention all-OVAC as a junior and first team honors as a senior.

The three-year hoop letterwinner was a second-team all-Valley honoree as a junior. He enjoyed a banner senior campaign, earning first-team all-OVAC, all-District and all-Valley honors while also being a special mention all-Ohio honoree.

Jami Bendle (1990s Athlete)



Jami Bendle (Edison High School, Class of 1994). This former Wildcat ace was absolutely dominant in the pitching circle throughout her prep and collegiate careers.

Her pitching stats were simply mind-boggling. Bendle finished with an 86-14 career record, which was an Ohio Valley record at the time of her graduation. She worked 649 innings, while recording 780 strikeouts against just 150 career walks. She allowed only 257 hits. Those stats certainly weren't hollow either, as they translated to three OVAC titles, three sectional crowns, three district titles and a pair of trips to the Ohio State Tournament.

As a senior, which was the first year of the Edison Local consolidation, Bendle's work in the circle helped the Wildcats reach the Division I regional tournament with a 29-0 record. She defeated Upper Arlington, while throwing a no-hitter, in the semifinals. Their quest for return trip to state came up short against Westerville South.

During her junior season, Bendle guided Edison South to the Division II state final where it fell, 6-1, to Tallmadge. As a sophomore, Edison South advanced to the state semifinals behind Bendle's right arm before falling to LaGrange Keystone, 4-2.

Bendle's accomplishments didn't go unnoticed. She was named all-OVAC four times and twice earned conference player of the year. She was twice named to the first-team all-Ohio squad and once to the second-team all-state unit. She was a four-time all-Eastern District pick and four-year member of the all River Valley League team.

Bendle's prep prominence earned her the right to pitch at the Division I level. She attended East Carolina University, helping the Pirates to win three consecutive Big South titles. She was first-team all-Big South as a junior and second-team as a senior.

While earning four letters at ECU, Bendle led the team in wins and strikeouts for three straight seasons. She had 27 victories in 1997 and also had 32 complete games that season. She finished at ECU ranked second in school history in games pitched (136), games started (118), complete games (92), innings pitched (755), strikeouts (328), wins (79) and shutouts (27). She compiled a 1.86 earned run average, which ranked fourth in school history. Also a standout in the classroom, Bendle earned Academic All-American district honors in 1998.

Mike Snively (1990s Athlete)



Mike Snively (River High School, Class of 1992). There wasn't a sport or season where this former Pilot didn't leave a lasting mark as he earned all-state status in three sports.

Playing for his father and fellow OVAC Hall of Famer, Terry, in football, Snively finished his career with 5,192 yards and 43 touchdowns. As a senior, he threw for 2,153 of those yards and 16 touchdowns. He also handled the kicking and punting duties, posting 11 PATs and a punting average of 36.3 yards.

During his junior season, he passed for 1,639 yards and 11 touchdowns. He also had 33 tackles from his safety spot that season.

During his career, Snively was named first-team all-Ohio as a senior and second-team as a junior. He was also first-team all-OVAC, all-Eastern District and all-Valley. He was also an all-district pick as a sophomore as well.

Snively played in the OVAC All-Star Game where he was voted a team captain.

When the winter rolled around, Snively didn't slow down. On the basketball court, he scored 1,415 points and knocked down 214 career three-point goals, which was an Ohio Valley record when he graduated. As a senior, Snively led the Ohio Valley with 74 three-point goals. He scored 514 points during his senior season en route to third-team all-Ohio, first-team all-Eastern District, all-Valley, all-District 12 and all-OVAC co-captaincy.

As a junior, Snively poured in 22.4 points a contest to go along with 7.1 rebounds, three assists and 2.3 steals. He connected on 71 three-point goals that season en route to honorable mention all-Ohio, first-team all-Eastern District, all-OVAC and all-Valley.

As a sophomore, Snively scored 17.9 points a game and had an outing where he knocked in 10 bonus goals, which is still a River High record.

In the spring, Snively shined at shortstop and pitcher for the Pilots. He finished his career as a .377 hitter with 97 hits, 64 RBI and seven home runs. As a senior, Snively batted .617, which was an OVAC record at the time. He posted a 5-3 record on the mound with a 1.63 earned run average. He struck out 30 and walked 10 in 51 innings of work.

Snively was a first-team all-state selection as a senior and played in the prestigious Mizuno All-Star Game. He was the OVAC Class 3A Player of the Year along with all-Eastern District, all-Valley and all-EOBL. He batted .409 as a junior was all-OVAC, all-Eastern District and all-EOBL.

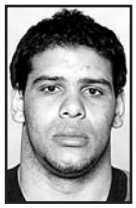
After his prep career, Snively attended Glenville State College to play football and basketball. He later coached at Glenville and was the interim head basketball coach at Bluefield State College where he was the youngest head coach in the NCAA at 24 years old. He also coached women's basketball, women's tennis and softball at Bluefield.

OHIO VALLEY ATHLETIC CONFERENCE — FOUNDED 1943 — O V A C

OHIO VALLEY ATHLETIC CONFERENCE — FOUNDED 1943 — O V A C

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Nate Davis (Athlete - 2000s)



Nate Davis (Bellaire High School, Class of 2006) -- It didn't matter the sport or season because this former Big Reds' standout just got it done.

A four-year letterman in basketball and a three-year letterman in football, Davis re-wrote the Big Reds record books in both sports.

As a basketball player, Davis did it both on the inside and outside for Gene Ammirante's team. After helping to get the Big Reds to the OHSAA Division III State Tournament in 2004, Davis led the Big Reds back to the regional in 2005 and to an undefeated regular season in 2006.

He finished his prep career with 2,562 points, which ranks ninth in Ohio history. Davis did much more than score the ball, however, as he also grabbed 1,175 rebounds, which ranks seventh in the Buckeye State, and he passed out more than 500 assists.

During his senior campaign, Davis averaged 38.9 points a contest en route to first-team all-Ohio accolades. He was a finalist for Mr. Basketball and was the Eastern District, District 12 and OVAC Class 3A player of the year. He took part in both the Ohio North-South and Ohio-Kentucky All-Star games.

On the football field, Davis was just as impressive for Coach John Magistro's team.

In his career, Davis completed 454-of-925 passes for 7,345 yards and 81 touchdowns. As a sophomore, Davis guided the Big Reds to the Division IV state semifinals, throwing for 2,296 yards and 22 touchdowns.

The Big Reds returned to the state semifinals in 2005 when Davis passed for 2,740 yards and 35 touchdowns.

Davis was Ohio's Division IV Offensive Player of the Year as a senior. He was a first-team all-Ohioan as both a junior and senior and earned second-team accolades as a sophomore. He was first-team all-OVAC three times and took part in both the Ohio North-South and OVAC All-Star games.

Along with his football and basketball prowess, Davis also lettered in baseball. He helped lead the Big Reds to the regional championship in 2003 when he was the club's every day catcher.

As a senior, Davis went out for track and won the OVAC discus title with a toss of 140 ft., 9 in.

Davis inked a scholarship to Ball State University and won the starting quarterback job as a true freshman. All told, he spent three seasons as the Cardinals' starting quarterback before announcing he'd forego his senior season to enter the NFL Draft.

At Ball State, Davis passed for 9,233 yards and 74 touchdowns.He was named the Mid American Conference's Offensive Player of the Year in 2008 and a first-team all-MAC selection. He was a finalist for the Manning Award and also the Ball State team MVP both as a sophomore and junior.

As a junior, he led the Cardinals to a 12-0 record and berth in the MAC Championship Game.

After opting to enter the draft, Davis was selected in the fifth round by the San Francisco 49ers. He made the team as a rookie. He was released and later signed to the team's practice squad in 2010. He also signed contracts with the Colts and Seahawks, but has spent the last several seasons in an indoor league in Texas, playing for the Amarillo Venom.

Davis becomes the second member of his family to reach the Hall of Fame. His brother, Jose, was inducted in 2007.

April Rotilio (Athlete - 2000s)



April Rotilio, St. John Central (Class of 2006) — Speed was the name of the game for this former Lady Irish track and field standout.

Rotilio is one of the area's most decorated track and field competitors, having compiled a whopping 12 medals as the OHSAA state meet.

The premier event in Rotilio's career was the 400 meter dash. She placed four times at the state meet, including earning gold as both a junior and senior. As a senior, she needed a furious kick in the final 100 meters to win the title in a school-record time of 56.09. Along with the two golds, Rotilio also earned a silver in the lap dash in 2004 and a fourth place in 2003.

Her speed was limited to the 400, however. She was twice a bronze medalist in the 100 meter dash and once a bronze medalist in the 200. She briefly owned the Division III state record in the 200 meter dash when she won the OVAC title in 24.87. She owns the SJC record (12.12) in the 100 meters, too.

Rotilio's third state title came when she anchored the 4×2 team in 2006.

Along with her state prowess, Rotilio set the regional record in the 400 meter dash and also won 11 OVAC event titles as she led her teams to four consecutive conference championships. The Lady Irish finished as Division III state runnerup twice during her career.

Along with the outdoor success she enjoyed, Rotilio was the 400 meter indoor state runnerup in 2006.

After her prep career, Rotilio competed at West Virginia University, earning all-American honors twice during the indoor campaign.

She was a member of the Mountaineers' Distance Medley Relay, which achieved the honor at the nationals along with a 4×4 team that scored in the NCAA Championship Meet.

As an individual with the Mountaineers, Rotilio still owns a pair of school records. She set the indoor and outdoor 400 meter dash benchmarks in 54.29 and 52.71, respectively.

Rotilio also earned Academic All-American honors during her career in Morgantown.

Before concentrating fully on track at St. John, Rotilio lettered twice in basketball.

Class of 2018

OVAC Hall of Fame

Sponsored by Robinson Auto Group

Ron White (OVAC 'Family')



Ron White (Springfield Local High School, Class of 1966). A member of the OVAC Executive Board for many years, his "baby" for 23 years was one of the conference showcase events – the OVAC Banquet of Champions.

White served as chairman until 2016 of the gala which featured more than 700 attendees honoring 75 championship teams, 50 scholarship winners and the conference coach of the year presentation.

White is also an integral part of the conference in basketball, serving as the assistant basketball commissioner for nine years and then being named the successor to the late John Howell as basketball commissioner beginning with the 2016-17 school year. He's also spent many years on the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game Committee.

He was a member of the Ohio Valley Board of Approved Basketball Officials, working on the courts in both Ohio and West Virginia for 30 years. He officiated five state tournaments in West Virginia and drew seven regional assignments in Ohio.

White is also a well-respected track official, serving primarily as a starter and working at both the high school (Ohio and West Virginia) and collegiate levels (MEC and PSAC). He received the OVAC Cal Giffin Memorial Track Service Award in 2009. A 1971 graduate of West Liberty State College who later obtained his master's degree from West Virginia University, he was an educator/athletic director/coach in the Buckeye Local School District and was responsible for starting the track program at old Buckeye South High School.

White, who spent 14 years in the Ohio National Guard and now resides in Wheeling, is also involved with the West Virginia "Super Six" state football championships.

Earl Haberfield (OVAC 'Contributor')



Earl Haberfield (Wheeling Central Catholic High School, Class of 1954). He originated the OVAC Basketball Classic – the Ohio vs. West Virginia all-star game now called the OVAC Samuel A. Mumley All-Star Basketball Classic – serving as the game director for the first five years of the event and as an active committee member for several years.

He was the first recipient of the Coaches Award presented at that game in 1984 – an award renamed in his honor as the OVAC Earl Haberfield Coaches Award.

Haberfield's coaching career included several stops – both inside and outside the OVAC – and concluded with 382 career victories.

He coached nine years at his alma mater – Wheeling Central – winning five W. Va. Class AA Catholic Championships. In 1963, the Maroon Knights were undefeated; ranked No. 1 in the all-division W. Va. State rankings and were the OVAC AAA champions.

Haberfield coached two years at Bishop Donahue, leading the Bishops to the 1969 W. Va. Class A Catholic Championship; three years at Warren Local High, named Tri-Valley Conference Coach of the Year in 1970; one year at Crooksville, leading the Ceramics to the Ohio Class A Regional; five years at Wintersville, engineering a rebuilding of that program; and two years at Meadowbrook, leading the Colts to their best two-year won/loss record up to that point.

Outside the OVAC, he coached at Vanlue and Amherst Marion Steele.

He was also the co-founder of the District 5 Basketball Coaches Associaton All-Star Game in 1978 and served as the president of District 5 that year.

Haberfield was awarded the Touchdown Club of Morgantown Certificate of Merit in 1963, '64 and '69 for contributions to West Virginia athletics; was given honorary memberships to the Ohio District Basketball Coaches Associations in Districts 3, 5 and 12; received an OVAC Certificate of Recognition for Exemplary Service in 1982; received the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club of the Upper Ohio Valley's Award for Outstanding Achievement in 1993; and was a charter member of the Wheeling Central Athletic Hall of Fame in 2017.

Haberfield graduated from West Liberty State College in 1958 and was inducted into the West Liberty Athletic Hall of Fame in 1996. A U.S. Navy veteran of the Korean War, he passed away in 2007.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

John Simonson (Media)



John Simonson (Beallsville High School, Class of 1966). A multi-media veteran, he has worked more than three decades in both radio and television covering football and boys' basketball games as a play-by-play announcer in the OVAC.

Simonson is well-known for his research and prep work regarding athletes and coaches prior to the broadcasts, compiling results, series records, coaching records, player statistics and other noteworthy information.

Known as the "Ohio Valley Sports Doctor", Simonson has served as an analyst for the WTOV TV9 "Game of the Week" and contributes to that station's high school football "playoff watch".

He also had a weekly sports talk show for 22 years on WWVA radio starting in 1988. While there, he earned the West Virginia Sportscaster of the Year award in 1997.

Simonson has provided assistance over the years to both the OHSAA and WVSSAC football playoff computer ratings' groups. He was a recipient of the East Ohio Interscholastic Athletic Administrator's Media Award.

He previously served as a voting member for the prestigious Heisman Trophy and many other awards including the Bear Bryant Coach of the Year award; basketball's Naismith and Wooden awards; and is an official donor to the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown where he has a lifetime membership.

A graduate of West Liberty State College, he served two years in the U.S. Army; was a teacher at Wheeling Park High School for 31 years (retiring in 2002); and served on the Union Local Board of Education.

Jack Berger (Coaches)



Jack Berger (Shadyside High School, Class of 1944). He founded Shadyside track in 1961 and was the architect of the OVAC's all-time championship-winning boys' track program, coaching the Tigers to their first seven OVAC titles (all in Class AA in a three-class format) from 1968-74 which started an OVAC record streak of 13 consecutive championships extended by his successor and former assistant Tom Vichich.

He was also a co-founder of the Interstate Track League, guiding Shadyside to seven straight league titles and a record 46 consecutive dual meet victories.

Berger led Shadyside to the school's first Ohio Class A District title in 1971 and to the Shadyside Relays crowns in the first year of the event which he helped establish in 1972 and a runner-up finish in '73; two Belmont County Relays championships and runner-up finishes in the district and regional meets.

He also coached the Tigers' football team from 1960-69, posting a 56-36-6 record. Shadyside won the OVAC Class A title in 1963 with a 7-1-2 record while other top record teams under Berger included 9-1 in 1968, 8-2 in 1966 and 7-3 in 1965.

He was honored in Shadyside with "Jack Berger Day" on June 15, 1974.

Bob Montgomery (Coaches)



Bob Montgomery (Moundsville High School, Class of 1964). He was a fixture in the dugout for the Monarchs, serving 42 years as head baseball coach and amassing an impressive record of 869-345 which ranks second in OVAC history behind Magnolia's Dave Cisar and third in West Virginia prep history behind John Lowery of Jefferson High and Cisar.

Montgomery coached teams won 24 sectional titles; made the regional finals 13 times and reached the Class AAA State Tournament five times, highlighted by the 1985 state championship where JM beat Huntington East, 8-7, in the title game.

His teams captured seven OVAC playoff championships, reaching the conference playoffs 25 times. The Monarchs also captured seven regular season crowns and five playoff titles in the Mountaineer League from 1976-86.

Montgomery, who retired following the 2017 season, coached 35 all-state players and more than 70 who played college baseball including OVAC Hall of Famer Chris Jones. He is a member of the West Virginia Baseball Coaches Association and the American Baseball Coaches Association.

He was selected as the OVAC Baseball Coach of the Year three times and the West Virginia Coach of the Year five times. He also was honored as the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Co-Man of the Year (with Magnolia's Cisar) at the 42nd Charity Awards Banquet in 2009.

Montgomery also doubled as a respected basketball and baseball official.

A member of the Ohio Valley Board of Approved Basketball Officials and a two-term president, he's been a referee since 1962, working more than 3,000 games including 29 state tournaments including 20 championship games in West Virginia and five tournaments/three title games in Ohio. He also officiated collegiate hoops in the West Virginia Conference.

He began umpiring American Legion baseball in 1972 and has worked five West Virginia State Tournaments while also spending 20 years (1970-90) doing NCAA Division II and West Virginia Conference games including five tournaments.

He was the first West Virginia resident inducted into the OHSAA Officials Hall of Fame in 2008; was the 1989 Official of the Year honoree by the National Federation of Interscholastic Officials Association and received the Distinguished West Virginian Award in 2012.

Montgomery, a three-sport athlete (football, baseball, basketball) at Moundsville High, graduated from West Liberty State College in 1969 and obtained his master's degree in communications from West Virginia University in 1977.

Bob Plotz (Athlete - 1940s)



Bob Plotz (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1946). A Purple Rider football and track standout, he was co-captain on both Ferry teams as a senior. He earned first team, one-class All-Ohio and first team All-OVAC largest Class AA as the Fred Thomas-coached Rider went 9-1 and captured the OVAC championship.

The three-year letterman in both football and track played in the first Ohio North-South All-Star Game and continued his statewide performance in track when he placed third in the low hurdles in the largest class state meet.

He earned a football scholarship to the University of Pittsburgh where he became a four-year regular. Starting as a 17-year-old freshman, Plotz was selected to the All-Opponent team of backyard rival West Virginia University and was selected to the All-East team. As a senior, he was an honorable mention All-America selection.

Plotz was picked in the 11th round of the National Football League Draft by the Cleveland Browns but was also "drafted" by the U.S. Army and served in the Korean War.

He was inducted into the Martins Ferry Athletic Hall of Fame in 2016.

Steve Kish, Jr. (Officials)



Steve Kish, Jr. (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1965).

His list of assignments during a 40-year career as a wrestling official is impressive, headed by 28 OHSAA State Tournaments; five WVSSAC State Tournaments and 30 OVAC Ron Mauck Wrestling Tournaments. He also worked the Medina Invitational 28 times and the Walsh Jesuit Tournament 20 times along with 10 Ohio Junior High School State Tournaments.

Among his awards, Kish received the prestigious OVAC 'Mr. Mat' honor in 1989; was selected Ohio Official of the Year in 1997 and 2010; OVAC Official of the Year in 1997; and West Virginia Official of the Year in 1999.

He was inducted into the Ohio Wrestling Officials Hall of Fame in 1999; the OHSAA Officials Hall of Fame in 1999; the Medina Invitational Hall of Fame in 2003; and most recently into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame/Ohio Chapter in 2014.

Kish, who retired as an official in 2014 but remains active as an OHSAA observer, currently serves as the coordinator of the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game's 10-Year Reunion.

Kish graduated from West Liberty State College with a bachelor's degree in Secondary Education in 1970 and received a master's degree in secondary education administration from West Virginia University in 1973.

He retired after 43 years as an educator including 36 years as a school administrator. He taught English from 1969-76 and served as head wrestling coach at Martins Ferry for six years (1970-76). His dual meet record was 33-16-1 with no losing seasons and he coached 13 sectional champions, 10 district champions, 15 state qualifiers and two state place-winners. His teams won the 1970 and '73 district titles and he was named East District Coach of the Year in 1974.

He was then assistant principal at Bellaire High School from 1976-78 and principal from 1978-90 before returning to Martins Ferry to serve as Superintendent of Schools from 1990-99. Since that time, he has served as Muskingum County At-Risk Coordinator for four years, assistant principal of Zanesville High School for five years; assistant principal at West Muskingum High School for two years and as principal at West Muskingum Middle School for two years. He retired in 2012, but spent five months as interim principal at Woodsfield Elementary School in 2014.

Among his education-related offices were president of the Belmont-Harrison Principal's Association; president of the Belmont-Harrison Superintendent's Association; member of the OVAC Executive Board and a past OVAC president (1982-83 and 1983-84); member of the Ohio Network: Training and Assistance for Schools and Communities (ONTASC) Executive Board; and president of the Ohio Valley Wrestling Officials Association.

Robert Pritchard (Athlete - 1950s)



Robert Pritchard (Wheeling High School, Class of 1953). He is, historically, among the elite wrestlers in OVAC history. He not only led Wheeling High School to the first state (one-class) championship for an OVAC member, in 1953, but became the first wrestler from the Ohio Valley and the state of West Virginia to win three state championships.

As a Wildcat sophomore in 1951, he captured the state one-class 103-pound state title and followed with consecutive crowns in 1952 and 1953 in the 112-pound class.. In the three finals, he defeated grapplers from Grafton, Beckley Woodrow Wilson and host Parkersburg.

During that era, Wheeling High and other high school mat teams competed not only against other high schools, but against YMCA wrestling teams. Pritchard, nicknamed "Bull", was unbeaten as a sophomore and senior with his only loss in 106 matches to a YMCA grappler from Columbus, who he later defeated twice. He was unbeaten against high school competitors.

The Wildcats' state championship coach was Ed Murphy, assisted by OVAC Hall of Fame coach Bob Roe, the Wildcats head coach in football and track. Pritchard also credits Barnesville's Jim Bradfield, who wrestled at Ohio State and led the Wheeling YMCA wrestling program, in his development along with his older brother Bill, who also wrestled at West Virginia U.

After graduation from high school, Bob Pritchard relocated to California and earned a degree from the University of California-Sacramento, which didn't sponsor a wrestling team,. However, Pritchard continued to compete on the YMCA level.

Geno Sessi (Athlete - 1950s)



Geno Sessi (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 1956). He is regarded as one of the Red Devils' best-ever multi-sport athletes while competing in football and track.

In the spring sport, he was the leading scorer two straight years in the one-class OVAC Track Meet and led his team to three straight titles as part of six consecutive Red Devil crowns (1952-57) coached by Dave Porterfield. A sprinter, hurdler and relay member, Sessi led all scorers as a junior with 15 1/2 points and as a senior with 14 1/2 points.

In football, the 5-foot-8, 174-pound two-way back and kick returner not only set a school record with 148 points as a senior, but led the Ohio Valley as well. That mark lasted one year when former teammate Jim Kerr scored one more point (149) before the OVAC Hall of Famer went on to start at Penn State and with the Washington Redskins.

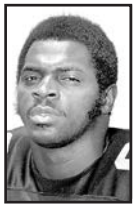
In football, Sessi was All-OVAC largest Class AA two years, All-Valley "Big School" co-captain as a senior, All-Eastern Ohio two years and All-Ohio largest Class AA second team defensive back as a senior. He was a two-time All-Valley track co-captain.

He earned a football scholarship to the University of Iowa where, after playing on the freshman team, made a smashing varsity debut as a sophomore by scoring three touchdowns on three plays (a 36-yard run and pass receptions of 80 and 15 yards) in a school-record 70-15 season-opening rout of Utah State. However, Sessi's career was cut short with a severe knee injury. In the remaining eight games, he gained only 33 yards and returned a kickoff 17 yards. The knee injury flared up again in spring drills to end his playing career.

Sessi passed away in 2016.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Don Osby (Athlete - 1960s)



Don Osby (Steubenville High School, Class of 1968). A three-sport Big Red stalwart, he is regarded as the best-ever track long jumper in OVAC history. He won Ohio's largest Class AA long jump title as a sophomore (23-feet, 3-inches) and junior (23-7 1/4) before being ruled ineligible (over age) as a senior.

As a junior, competing on one of the most talented track teams in OV history, he was one of 10 All-Valley Big Red selections and one of four Big Red co-captains while being cited as "the finest jumper ever on the local scene." That spring, he won the Ohio State meet, the prestigious Mansfield Relays, OVAC Class AAA, Martins Ferry and West Liberty Relays, the Ohio District meet and was second in the Regional meet. He also ran a leg on an OV record-setting 4x440 relay unit which timed 3:19.8.

As a sophomore, besides the state crown, he won he Martins Ferry Relays in 23-1 3/4.

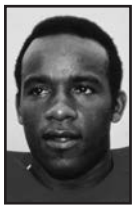
Big Red won its first four OVAC track crowns from 1964-67 with Osby featured on the last two.

In football, he was a three-year standout at end on Ohio-ranked teams with records of 9-1, 9-1 and 8-2.

He was also a starter in basketball. He is honored on the Big Red Wall of Fame.

Osby accepted a football scholarship to the University of Iowa and started at wide receiver as a sophomore when he landed 19 passes for 276 yards, third on the team. After sitting out his junior year with an injury, he returned as a starter at tight end as a senior. He passed away in early 2018 in Cincinnati.

Bill Tucker (Athlete - 1960s)



Bill Tucker (Weir High School, Class of 1962). A three-sport Red Rider athlete, he was a major player on back-to-back state Class AAA championship teams before starring in college and competing five years in the National Football League.

A two-way back and defensive tackle, he teamed with OVAC Hall of Famer Bob Kelley to lead Weir to the 1960 state crown with a 40-0 title game rout of Nitro. The anchor of the 1961 team, he scored two TDs in a 26-7 state title win over St. Albans. Both teams finished 10-1. Tucker earned first team All-State as a senior and third team as a junior. He was selected captain of the All-OVAC and All-Valley squads as a senior. In two seasons, he scored 116 points and rushed for 1,445 yards. In the annual Ohio-W,Va. All-Star game, he led W.Va. to a 12-6 win and was selected team MVP.

He played forward and center in basketball and started on the 1962 team which went unbeaten in regular season, won an OVAC title, and ended 24-1 as state Class AAA runner-up to Beckley Woodrow Wilson. In track, he ran the hurdles, 220- and 440-yard sprints, and was a member of 440, 880 and mile relay units in OVAC and state competition..

After taking a year off after high school, he accepted a football scholarship to Tennessee State University to play for Hall of Fame coach John Merritt. A four-year player, he rushed 281 times for 1,321 yards. He was selected to play in the Blue-Gray Classic and Senior Bowl, the first Tiger to play in the latter.

He was drafted by the San Francisco 49ers in the third round, as the 65th overall selection, and competed as a fullback for five years in the NFL- - four with the 49ers and one with the Chicago Bears. In 69 games, he rushed 127 times for 431 yards and 6 TDs and landed 59 passes for 496 yards and seven scores.

Tucker, who passed away in 2015, is inducted into the City of Weirton Hall of Fame, Tennessee State U. Sports Hall of Fame and Weir High Wall of Fame.

Keith Vrotsos (Athlete - 1970s)



Keith Vrotsos (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1979). Hpersonified versatility at an elite level, starring for the Purple Riders in football, basketball and baseball, the diamond sport proving his pathway to a superb collegiate career.The four-year regular with the Purple Rider baseball team batted better than .330 his first two seasons before exploding in his junior campaign. Vrotsos earned first-team All-OVAC, All-Eastern District and All-Valley honors that campaign after hitting at a robust .458 clip. He concluded his prep career by turning in a superb senior season. He compiled a .386 average with 21 RBI. He was again accorded first team All-OVAC, All-Eastern District and All-Valley honors. The 5-11, 170-pounder was a four-time Eastern Ohio Baseball All-Star Game participant.

Vrotsos was also a standout on the gridiron. He excelled as a placekicker as a sophomore, kicking 19 PATS and one field goal before becoming the Purple's starting QB his final two seasons. Vrotsos completed 49-of-100 tosses as a junior, good for 531 yards. He also rushed for 250 stripes. As a senior, he earned second-team All-Ohio UPI honors after completing 56-of-111 passes for 581 yards while also rushing for 423 stripes. He also picked off three passes as a defensive back. In addition to his all-state honors, Vrotsos was named first-team All-OVAC, All-Eastern District and All-Valley. He also played in the OVAC All-Star Game.

He was also a three-year letterman in hoops. The talented point guard averaged some 7 points as a sophomore, 10.1 as a junior and 9.2 as a senior. He was named second-team All-OVAC as a senior. He helped lead the Purple Riders to sectional titles his final two campaigns and capped his hoop career by playing in the OVAC All-Star Game.

Vrotsos earned a baseball scholarship to Ohio University where he lettered all four years and was named co-captain in both his junior and senior seasons. His final season with the Bobcats was outstanding as he batted .341 with 12 doubles, 1 triple, 7 home runs, 32 RBI and 12 stolen bases. Vrotsos was a second-team All-Mid-American Conference selection as a senior. He finished his Bobcat career with a sharp .311 batting average. When he graduated, Vrotsos ranked in the top 10 in the following categories: games played (157), hits (141), home runs (15), RBI (79), doubles (20), total bases (201), runs scores (105) and stolen bases (30).

Ron Lee (Athlete - 1970s)



Ron Lee (Bellaire High School, Class of 1971). Lee is on the short list of outstanding running backs who have graced Nelson Field.

The 6-3, 195-pounder carried the Big Reds of Jake Olsavsky to an 8-1-1 mark in his senior campaign. Bellaire finished second in the OVAC 3A title chase, trailing Wintersville. The teams tied 0-0 in regular-season play. The Big Reds finished No. 19 in the UPI Class AAA poll, the largest classification in the state.

Lee rushed for 989 yards and 16 TDs that fall. His 108 points led the OVAC 3A in scoring. He also landed 10 passes. Those numbers earned Lee first-team All-Valley and All-OVAC plaudits while being named second-team All-Ohio by UPI. He also played in the Ohio North-South All-Star Game.

Lee was also a three-year letterman in basketball and he was voted the Big Reds' top athlete as a senior.

Lee's prep heroics earned him a grid scholarship to WVU. He chose the Mountaineers over a slew of D-I offers. Freshmen were not eligible to play in those days. Lee, however, enjoyed a strong campaign with the Mountaineers' frosh squad, leading the team with 372 yards on 97 carries in five games.

As a sophomore, Lee moved into the No. 2 fullback slot, rushing for 304 yards and three TDs on 76 carries. His toughness was matched by his versatility, resulting in him being utilized as fullback and tailback his final two seasons.

Lee was the team's second leading rusher both of those campaigns, gaining 543 yards as a junior and 623 stripes as a senior, while also leading the team with 10 TDs.

A member of two WVU Peach Bowl teams, he was selected as No. 74 on the list of top 100 all-time WVU football players in the WVU Athletic Department Book, "Saturday Snapshots," published in 2015.

His success at Morgantown resulted in Lee being chosen in the third round of the NFL Draft by the Baltimore Colts. He played in 42 games, starting eight. He ended his Colts' career with 940 yards on 206 carries.

Georgia Dawson (Athlete - 1980s)



Georgia Dawson (Bellaire High School, Class of 1984). Dawson was a tremendous three-sport standout for the Big Reds, excelling in basketball, volleyball and track & field.

She achieved a rarity in the realm of Bellaire athletics, becoming a four-year letter-winner in basketball, surpassing the 1,000-point plateau while also grabbing more than 1,000 rebounds. Dawson, who served as hoop captain as both a junior and senior, was a three-time all-OVAC selection while making the All-Valley first-team as a senior. Dawson was named a two-time All-District 12 basketball honoree and was a special mention all-Ohio choice as a senior.

Dawson was just as dominant in volleyball. The three-year letterwinner served as the team captain in her final two seasons, garnering first-team all-OVAC honors as a junior and senior. Dawson was also a three-year standout in track for the Big Reds. In all, she finished her illustrious prep career with 10 letters.

Dawson's athletic success didn't stop after she picked up her Bellaire High diploma as she took her immense athletic talent to West Liberty State College where she became a four-year letterwinner in basketball and volleyball. Dawson was the Hilltoppers' volleyball captain as a junior and senior, making the WVIAC All-Conference Team three seasons while being accorded Volleyball Athlete of the Year her senior season.

In basketball, she still ranks in the top 20 in rebounds in Hilltopper history with 541 caroms.

Dawson was inducted into both the Bellaire High and the West Liberty halls of fame. She was honored by the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan in 1988 and inducted into the District 12 Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2017.

Ron Stephens (Athlete - 1980s)



Ron Stephens (The Linsly School, Class of 1985). He is remembered as one of the greatest baseball players in Linsly history, but the 6-4, 185-pounder was also a gifted gridder and hoopster for the Cadets.

He was twice tabbed Linsly's baseball MVP. The talented shortsop was captain of the All-State Class A team as a senior while being an All-Valley first-team honoree as both a junior and senior.

Stephens batted a robust .403 as a senior with 11 doubles, 29 runs scored and a school record 28 stolen bases. That same season, he was a sparkling 5-1 on the mound with a 1.65 ERA, helping the Cadets win the OVAC Class 2A crown and script a 20-8 record. Stephens batted .349 as a sophomore and he hit at a .345 clip as a junior with a pair of grand slams. The versatile performer was a two-time first team Eastern Ohio Baseball League selection, earning player of the year honors as a senior.

On the gridiron, the wide receiver/defensive back/kick returner was so dynamic that he received scholarship offers from many D-I schools, including WVU and Pitt. He set an Ohio Valley record with 61 catches in 10 games, a mark that has since been erased. Stephens was a three-year starter in football for the Cadets. He was a first-team All-State, All-Valley and All-OVAC honoree as a senior.

He was no slouch in basketball either, earning first-team All-OVAC and second-team All-Valley honors as a senior after leading the Cadets in scoring and rebounding. He was third-team All-Valley as a junior.

Stephens was drafted out of high school by the Boston Red Sox in the 13th round (413th overall). He opted, however, to go the collegiate ranks and accepted a baseball scholarship to the University of Cincinnati. At UC, he was utilized as an infielder, but his meal ticket was on the mound. He was 6-5 as a junior, leading the Bearcats in strikeouts and a 3.84 ERA. He was selected by the Chicago White Sox in the 58th round after his junior campaign and played in the minor leagues for five seasons, advancing to the AAA level with the Vancouver White Sox of the Pacific Coast League. He retired after the 1992 season.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Eric McGhee (Athlete - 1990s)



Eric McGhee (Wheeling Central High School, Class of 1991). There have been a lot of football standouts come through the Maroon Knights' program and this multiple-time all-state selection is right near the top of the list.

Actually, McGhee was a standout in three sports during his time at Central, but it was on the football field where he left his biggest mark. En route to winning the Kennedy Award, which is presented to West Virginia's top prep player, as a senior, McGhee rushed for a modern Ohio Valley record of 2,479 yards on 307 carries in 12 games while scoring 30 touchdowns. All told, he finished with 34 touchdowns and more than 3,000 all-purpose yards. Also a standout on the defensive side of the ball, McGhee had four interceptions, returned a fumble recovery for a touchdown and scored 192 total points, which was the best in the Mountain State that season. As a junior, McGhee finished second in the Kennedy Award balloting after leading the Ohio Valley in rushing. He accumulated 1,565 yards on 201 carries. He scored 28 touchdowns on the ground and 172 total points to lead the state. Along with his all-state and Kennedy Awards, McGhee was also recognized as the Gatorade Player of the Year, Morgantown Touchdown Club Player of the Year, all-USA Today team and the Touchdown Club of Atlanta also recognized McGhee's efforts. Locally, the awards were obviously plentiful, too. He was twice named captain of the all-Valley Small-School team and he was captain of the all-OVAC Class AA team.

After his prep career, McGhee accepted an offer to attend Bowling Green State University. He played two years and served primarily as a kick returner. He was a part of the Falcons' 1992 team which finished 10-2 and won the Las Vegas Bowl. He led the team in kickoff returns with 14 for 269 yards that season, including 125 yards against Wisconsin. He played two seasons of professional football for the Steel Valley Smash.

Along with his football exploits, McGhee was part of the Maroon Knights' 1990 Class AA state championship basketball team. He was also the OVAC Class AA baseball player of the year after serving as the Knights' lead-off hitter.

Adam Hoppel (Athlete - 2000s)



Adam Hoppel (Beaver Local High School, Class of 2004). Whether it was on the football field or the wrestling mat, this talented athlete shined brightly during all four years of his prep career.

In football, Hoppel was a four-year mainstay for Coach Rich Wright's team. He was a part of two undefeated teams and three playoff qualifiers as a standout on both lines.

A three-time, first-team all-Eastern District pick, Hoppel shined along the defensive line, accumulating 217 career tackles and 26 sacks in his career.

Along with all-district, Hoppel was named second-team all-Ohio as a senior. He was a three-time all-OVAC selection and multiple-time pick for the Columbiana County and Quad County all-star teams.

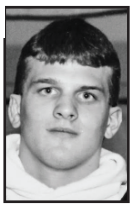
In wrestling, Hoppel was a four-year mainstay. Qualifying for the OHSAA Division II State Tournament in each of his seasons, Hoppel was a four-time sectional and three-time district champion. In Columbus, he placed three times. As a sophomore, Hoppel had his arm raised as a state champion. He was runner-up in both 2003 and 2004. As a freshman, he qualified and won two matches, but only six wrestlers placed at that time.

In addition to his efforts in the postseason, Hoppel was a four-time champion at the OVAC Tournament. When he accomplished the feat in 2004, Hoppel was just the fourth wrestler ever to do so.

He finished his mat career with a Beaver Local record of 154 victories.

After electing to pursue a football career, Hoppel signed with the University of Cincinnati where he became a starter in 2006 along the defensive line. As a senior, he collected 38 tackles, had an interception and a fumble recovery. He had his career high of seven tackles in the Papajohns.com Bowl. Hoppel signed an undrafted free agent with the Cleveland Browns, but was released prior to the start of the season.

Kelly Shields (Athlete - 1990s)



Kelly Shields (Edison High School, Class of 1993). This former Wildcat made a decision to focus on the sport of wrestling as a youngster, and it was a decision that paid the ultimate dividends.

A four-year mainstay for the Wildcats, Shields helped to put Edison on the map at the state level through his exploits on the mat during his career which saw him rack up 137 career wins.

Shields is one of just nine OVAC wrestlers to win four championships at the OVAC Ron Mauck Wrestling Tournament. He won the 1990 and 1991 crowns at 103 pounds; bumped up a class to 112 in 1992 and then captured his fourth title at 119 as a senior.

The success didn't end inside what was then known as the Wheeling Civic Center as Shields put forth a brilliant career at the state level, too, becoming a constant at the Nutter Center on the campus of Wright State University.

Shields was a four-time state qualifier and claimed the Division II, 103-pound state championship as a sophomore. He finished 37-1 as a senior, dropping his first-round match in the state tournament which, at that time, eliminated him from the tournament.

Shields won the district championship as a freshman, sophomore and senior. After his senior season, Shields was recognized as the OVAC Wrestler of the Year at 119 pounds. He was also named an All-American by the National High School Wrestling Team.

Upon graduation, Shields enrolled at Kent State University with intentions of continuing his wrestling career, however he suffered a knee injury which led to the end of competitive wrestling. Shields' abilities also earned a spot on Team Ohio, which allowed him to travel to places such as Hawaii, Australia and New Zealand in the summer of 1992.

Zach Collaros (Athlete - 2000s)



Zach Collaros (Steubenville High School, Class of 2007). Eligible for induction for the first time, this former Big Red multi-sport standout was a no-brainer.

During his prep career, it didn't matter the sport that Collaros played. He simply shined in them all, earning four letters in basketball, baseball and football. However, it was on the football field for Coach Reno Saccoccia's team where Collaros made arguably his biggest impact.

Collaros was a three-year starter at quarterback and amassed an incredible 41-1 record while helping to lead Big Red to back-to-back 15-0 state championship in 2005 and 2006. During those seasons, he broke every Steubenville passing record.

As a senior, en route to first-team all-Ohio and state player of the year honors in Division III, Collaros passed for 2,550 yards and 30 touchdowns against just four interceptions. He also rushed for 15 touchdowns and 720 yards. All told, he passed for 4,306 yards and 53 touchdowns, while running for 1,304 yards and 25 touchdowns.

Collaros wasn't a one-way player, either. He shined at defensive back, recording 14 interceptions. He ran six of those back for touchdowns, while also recovering five fumbles and scoring twice.

On the baseball field, Collaros was the starting shortstop basically from day one of his career for Coach Fred Heatherington's ultra-successful program. He started on the Big Red state runner-up team in 2004 and had the team's lone hit in the game.

For his career, Collaros batted .407 with 100 RBI, 122 runs scored, 17 doubles, eight triples and two home runs.

In basketball, Collaros earned first-team all-OVAC as a junior and senior. He finished his career with 1,203 career points, which is fourth-best in Steubenville history. He averaged 19.8 points a game as a junior and 16 as a senior.

Upon completing his prep career, Collaros accepted a scholarship to play football at Cincinnati. He was a four-year letterman with the Bearcats and became the team's starting quarterback as a junior.

He earned all-Big East honors after passing for 2,902 yards and 26 touchdowns. He led the conference in passing yards per game (263.8), passing yards (2,902) and total offense (282.2). As a senior, he passed for 1,940 yards and 15 touchdowns, but missed more than three full games with an injury before returning to quarterback the team to victory in the Liberty Bowl.

He finished his UC career with more than 5,000 passing yards and 50 touchdowns, becoming only the second quarterback in school history to accomplish such a feat.

Collaros signed as an undrafted free agent with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, but was later released. He's spent the five seasons as the starting quarterback for the Hamilton Ticats and was traded to the Saskatchewan Roughriders in 2018.

Dr. Dan Doyle (OVAC Family)



Dr. Dan Doyle (Wheeling Central High School, Class of 1974). He has become a fixture in the conference, serving as director of the OVAC Ron Mauck Wrestling Tournament since 2009 and OVAC Wrestling Commissioner since 2013. He has been on the OVAC Executive Board since the early 2000s, serving as president during the 2009-10 and 2010-11 school years.

His contribution to the sport of wrestling was recognized by his peers when he was named the OVAC "Mr. Mat Award" recipient in 2005. He has been responsible for many changes in the seeding process for the conference wrestling tournament.

Doyle has also worked with the OVAC Museum Committee for many years.

He began as a high school wrestler at Wheeling Central, capturing the West Virginia State Championship at 112 pounds as a senior. He was also a three-time OVAC Tournament place-winner, claiming the conference title in 1972.

Doyle then went on to Allegheny College, graduating there in 1977 with a bachelor's degree in geology. He was a four-year wrestler there and an NCAA Division III National qualifier. He earned his master's degree in science and education from the University of Dayton and his doctorate from West Virginia University.

He was a teacher/coach at Jefferson Union High School for eight years, serving as head coach in wrestling and baseball and as an assistant in football.

Doyle then spent 16 years in the Buckeye Local district starting in 1985, serving as an administrator for 12 years including high school principal. He was the head wrestling coach all 16 years, leading Buckeye to overall OVAC Tournament Championships in 1996 and 1997, also winning the OVAC Dual Meet Championship those two years. He was a two-time OVAC and Eastern District Coach of the Year.

He then served as the Superintendent of Schools of the Noble Local School District (Shenandoah) and later spent time as interim superintendent at Frontier Local.

Class of 2019

OVAC Hall of Fame

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PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Roy 'Al' Glitch (OVAC Contributor)



Roy 'Al' Glitch (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1969). When you're known as the "Voice of the OVAC", that's a pretty good place to start, but Glitch has also worn many other hats within the conference over the years from athlete to coach to director.

Many known Glitch as a mainstay as the public address announcer for many years at both the OVAC Boys/Girls Basketball Tournaments and the OVAC Samuel A. Mumley All-Star Basketball Classic (both events at Ohio University Eastern), and he's also been on the "mic" and behind the scorebook at countless regular season and tournament events at St. Clairsville High School.

Glitch also spent many years on the OVAC Baseball Committee, including 15 years as the sport's director, and was the recipient of the 2013 OVAC Thomas E. Rataiczak Scorekeeper/Timer Award.

At St. Clairsville, he spent 32 years as a math instructor and coached multiple sports, including serving as head boys' basketball coach from 1978-85. He was the District 12 Coach of the Year in 1980 and coached in the OVAC All-Star Game in 1981. He was also named District 12 Assistant Coach of the Year in 2002.

He also was an assistant baseball and football coach for the Red Devils for 11 years.

Glitch had the St. Clairsville Junior High Tournament named in his honor in 2012 and he received the District 12 Basketball Coaches Association Distinguished Service Award in 2017.

As an athlete, he's a part of two teams on the Bridgeport High "Wall of Fame" – the 1969 basketball and baseball state runner-up teams; and was an all-OVAC and all-Eastern Ohio selection in both sports, earning honorable mention all-Ohio in basketball.

Glitch then attended West Liberty State College where he was a four-year letterman and a two-time all-WVIAC selection. He received his bachelor's degree in secondary mathematics in 1973 there and his master's in education from the University of Dayton in 1981.

He also competed in the Ohio Valley Baseball League for 24 years as a standout on the Warwood Reds.

In addition to teaching at St. C., he also served as a GED math instructor at the Belmont Correctional Institute, earning five nominations as Ohio Corrections Teacher of the Year and becoming a finalist in 2015.

Dave Bruney (Coach)



Dave Bruney (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1969). If ever there was someone who bleeds purple, it's "Coach Dave." During 40 years on the sidelines including 39 at his alma mater, Bruney amassed an impressive overall record of 284-135 (275-134 at Ferry High) which ranks among the top 20 in OHSAA history.

Bruney-coached Purple Rider teams made the OHSAA playoffs 14 times in a 20-year span starting in 1998 ('98, '99, 2000, '02, '03, '04, '06, '08, '09, '10, '11, '13, '14, '17) and had only six sub-.500 seasons in 39 years with only one after 1990. The Purple Riders fashioned four undefeated regular seasons under Bruney (1979, 1998, 2002 and 2004), with the '04 team winning the OHSAA Division IV, Region 15 championship before falling to Youngstown Cardinal Mooney (27-6) in the state semifinals.

His teams also won six Ohio Valley Athletic Conference championships (1999, 2002, '04, '08, '11 and '13) and he coached in the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Games four times.

Bruney sports an impressive list of honors, including being named to the OHSFCA Hall of Fame in 2010. He also received the Ohio Coaches Achievement Award from the Minor Pro Football Hall of Fame in Pittsburg in 2014; the entire Bruney family was honored by the Lou Holtz Upper "Ohio Valley Hall of Fame with the Heritage Family Award in 2010; and Martins Ferry's Dave Bruney Football Complex was named in his honor.

Bruney's coaching career began in 1973 as an assistant at Buckeye North under Bill McHugh. He then served as an assistant at Ferry three years (1974-76) under his cousin, Bob Bruney and then spent a year as a graduate assistant at Marshall University under Frank Ellwood (1977).

His first head coaching stop was at neighboring Bridgeport where he guided the Bulldogs to a sparkling 9-1 season.

As an athlete, Bruney was an all-Ohio honorable mention and all-OVAC first team selection as a member of the Purple Riders' football team. He went on to Ohio University (graduating in 1973) where he was recruited by Ferry graduate Cliff Hefflefinger and played for the Bobcats under Coach Bill Hess.

Jim Crosier (Official)



Jim Crosier (Steubenville High School, Class of 1967). As a member of the Ohio Valley Wrestling Officials Association, Crosier spent 29 years as an official, working countless OHSAA sectional, district and state tournaments. He was also invited to officiate the 1979 NAIA National Wrestling Championships at the Wheeling Civic Center (now WesBanco Arena).

In 2001, Crosier was named the Larry Deaton OVAC Official of the Year by the OVAC Wrestling Coaches Association for his exceptional efforts as an overseer of the mats; he was inducted into the Ohio Wrestling Officials Hall of Fame in 2014 and was the recipient of the prestigious "Mr. Mat" award at the OVAC Ron Mauck Wrestling Tournament in 2016.

Crosier spent 40 years as an educator, retiring in 2011. He taught and coached at Steubenville High for two years before moving on to Union Local where he was a teacher, wrestling coach and athletic director during his 38 years there.

As head coach of the Jets for nine years, Crosier's mat teams won two OVAC Class 2A titles and one Class 3A championship. He coached four OVAC champions – Mike Gregg, Kelly Wallace, Randy Simpson and Jeff McCormick. He was named OVAC Coach of the Year three times (Class AA in 1974 and '75 and Class AAA in 1980).

He was the founder of the Ohio Valley Junior High Championships in 1976 (now called the OVAC Junior High Championships).

As an athlete at Steubenville High, Crosier was an OVAC runner-up at 175 pounds competing under OVAC Hall of Fame coach Bob Hedmond.

Don Clegg (Media)



Don Clegg (John Marshall High School, Class of 1974). He enjoyed a successful 26-year career covering local colleges and high schools as a sports reporter and editor at the Wheeling News-Register and The Intelligencer.

During his tenure with the Wheeling newspapers, Clegg and members of his sports departments received several state-wide awards for various articles, features and special projects. A past president of the West Virginia Sportswriters Association (WVSWA), Clegg chaired numerous all-state boys' and girls' basketball and baseball committees for the WVSWA. He also did publicity for the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game for several years.

After leaving the newspaper business, he provided extensive editorial services to the West Liberty University athletic department as a professional freelance writer for many years before being named sports information director at the university in June of 2017. As sports information director, Clegg leads the sports information department's daily operations and serve as primary media contact for WLU's 18 intercollegiate sports. His other responsibilities include generating all editorial content and athletic publications, overseeing West Liberty's athletics website and maintaining sports records and statistics.

Clegg also serves as a member of West Liberty's Athletic Hall of Fame Committee.

He is a native of Moundsville and a John Marshall High School alum who later graduated with honors from the P.I. Reed School of Journalism at West Virginia University in 1978.

Jay Circosta (Coach)



Jay Circosta (Shadyside High School, Class of 1963). When someone dedicates a half-century of their life to something, it's truly amazing, and when you're the second all-time winningest football coach in the Ohio Valley's football tradition-rich history, earning Hall of Fame accolades is a given.

Circosta achieved both, coaching a total of 50 years including 47 as a head coach and amassing a superb record of 336-144-5 -- second only to Steubenville Big Red boss Reno Saccoccia in Ohio Valley history and ranking in the top 10 all-time in the state of Ohio

The Monroe County legend began his coaching career in 1968, serving as an assistant three years at Woodsfield under former Ohio State University standout Bob Butts. When butts left for Union Local, Circosta took over to begin a 47-year head coaching run, the first 23 seasons at Woodsfield and then, following consolidation, for 24 years at Monroe Central.

Circosta-coached teams enjoyed six undefeated regular seasons (1973, '76, '91, '93, '99 and 2002); captured 14 OVAC championships (nine at Woodsfield; five at Monroe Central) and earned 14 OHSAA playoff appearances (five at Woodsfield; nine at Monroe Central).

Woodsfield was crowned the 1976 Class A state champions by The Associated Press and Monroe Central won the Division V, Region 19 championship in 2001 before falling to Bedford Chanel in the state semifinals.

He coached in the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game four times (1974, '77, '81 & 2000) with a 2-2 record and he coached in the BACF All-Star Game once.

Circosta also coached baseball for 14 years with nearly 150 victories.

He was previously inducted into the West Liberty University Athletic Hall of Fame (1996) and the Ohio High School Football Coaches Hall of Fame. He was named the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club's "Man of the Year" in 2005 and was named Eastern District and Pioneer Valley Conference "Coach of the Year" numerous times. The road through Memorial Park in Woodsfield is named "Jay Circosta Boulevard" and the "Jay Circosta Fieldhouse" is part of the athletic facilities.

He received an A.B. in Secondary Education (P.E, Health, Speech and Driver Education) from West Liberty where he played both football and baseball and an M.S.in Education in Guidance and Counseling from the University of Dayton.

Chet Daniels (Athlete - 1940s)



Chet Daniels (Bellaire High School, Class of 1947). He earned seven varsity Big Reds' letters — three each in football and basketball plus one in track.

He earned about every major football honor as a center in football his final years — a two-time All-OVAC largest Class AA, two-time Al-Eastern Ohio, and second team All-Ohio as a senior and third team All-Ohio as a junior in the one-class Associated Press selections. He was team Most Valuable Player and team captain on the 9-1-1 record 1946 team which won the OVAC championship. He was selected on Ohio's South All-Star team.

He earned a football scholarship to the University of Oregon, where he excelled for four years — one year on the freshman team and three varsity letters as a two-way guard. The 1948 Oregon team went 9-1 overall and 7-0 in Pacific Coast Conference play and accepted an invitation to play Doak Walker-led Southern Methodist University in the 1949 Cotton Bowl. The Ducks bowed, 21-13 in the game with Daniels, an All-Pacific Coast Conference selection, kicking the extra-point in the fourth quarter. The 1948 Oregon football team, with Daniels, was inducted into the state of Oregon Hall of Fame in 1990.

Daniels, an honorable mention All-America selection, led the NCAA in placekicking points with 46 in 1949.

After college graduation, he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and, after discharge, made his home in Portland, Oregon. He died in 2003.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

George Deiderich (Athlete - 1950s)



George Deiderich (Toronto High School, Class of 1954). He was a nine-letter, four-year performer in football, basketball and track for the Red Knights.

A teammate of OVAC Hall of Famer Don Sutherin, they served as football team co-captains and also were starting guards on a 17-2 record basketball squad, the best record at the school in 17 years.

In track, Deiderich was in a class by himself. He was the leading scorer two straight years in the one-class OVAC Track Meet, scoring 16 points as a junior and 16 1/2 points as senior with first-place finishes in the high and low hurdles, second in the shot put and running a leg on the winning shuttle hurdle team. In Ohio's largest Class A state meet, he placed third in the 120-yard high hurdles.

After a year at Valley Forge Military Academy in Wayne, Pa., where he played football, he earned a scholarship to Vanderbilt University where he starred in football and track. A three-year football letterman, he was a two-year starter at guard on offense and defense and was a two-time first team All-Southeastern Conference selection while becoming a rare consensus first team All-America selection in 1958. The 11-player A-A honor roll included two Heisman Trophy winners in Pete Dawkins of Navy and Billy Cannon of LSU.

The 6-foot-1, 200-pound Deiderich also starred in track as he broke the school record with a 14.46 second clocking in the 120-yard high hurdles.

He was drafted by the Los Angeles Rams in the 23rd round of the NFL Draft but opted to sign with the Montreal Alouettes of the Canadian Football League. He played in 19 games in three CFL seasons — 2 1/2 with Montreal before finishing up with the Ottawa Roughriders. He had a 52-yard interception return for a touchdown in 1960. He died in 1999.

Bob DiStefano (Athlete - 1960s)



Bob DiStefano (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1964). A four-sport performer, this Purple Rider is best known for three starting years in football plus baseball and track as well as four years of basketball.

He was the starting quarterback as a junior and senior after starting at halfback on a 10-0 record, state-ranked and OVAC Class AAA champion team as a sophomore. It was Ferry's third straight unbeaten season.

As a senior, the Riders went 9-0-1 to win the OVAC Class AAA crown and were ranked No. 5 in the Ohio largest Class AA Poll. The team co-captain, who was also a standout defensive back, earned first team earned All-Ohio from both The Associated Press and United Press International at quarterback as well as All-OVAC Class 3A and All-Eastern Ohio honors. He was selected Ohio Class AA "Back of the Year" and also gained national attention as a Scholastic Coach All-America selection. In the opening game of the season, Ferry defeated Canton McKinley, 20-8, and the only blemish on the record was a 14-14 tie at New Philadelphia.

The 6-foot, 180-pounder, who earned first team All-Valley "Big School" as a senior, passed for 1,240 yards and rushed for 500 yards while scoring 66 points. He also landed four passes for 41 yards.

Ferry went 7-3-1 in his junior season as he earned second team All-Valley "Big School" and first team All-Eastern Ohio.

In basketball, DiStefano played guard and was the team's second leading scorer.

He earned a football scholarship to Purdue University where he was the starting quarterback on the freshman team in an era of three-year varsity teams. He is deceased.

Jeff Patterson (Athlete - 1970s)



Jeff Patterson (Brooke High School, Class of 1979). Patterson was one of the finest performers ever in the tradition-rich Brooke football history, starring as as a big-play wide receiver for legendary coach Paul "Bud" Billiard.

Patterson's exploits helped to lead the Bruins to their first playoff berth in 1978. He landed 22 passes for 501 yards and eight TDs that fall. He earned second-team all-state honors to go with first-team recognition on the all-OVAC, all-Valley (serving as co-captain) and all-Mountaineer squads.

Moreover, the glue-fingered wideout was chosen to play in the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game. He was also awarded the Clark Hinkle Scholarship.

Patterson also enjoyed a banner junior grid campaign. He caught 36 passes for 686 yards for eight TDs while also returning a punt for a six-pointer. The versatile performer was accorded first-team all-state honors for his efforts that fall. He was also named to the first team of the all-OVAC, all-Valley and all-Mountaineer League squads.

Patterson was also a two-year letterman in basketball for the Bruins. He helped Brooke to a 15-win campaign and a sectional crown his senior year.

The talented guard averaged 14.2 ppg that winter, earning him third-team all-Valley laurels. He was also chosen to play in the OVAC Sam Mumley Basketball Classic.

Football earned Patterson a scholarship to Youngstown State, but he was just as excellent in track and field as sprinter.

He placed seventh in the West Virginia state meet as a senior in the 200 meters. He was fifth in the same event in the OVAC meet while taking fourth in the 100-meters.

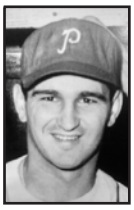
Patterson enjoyed a banner junior year as a thinclad. He was fourth in the OVAC 200 meters while taking sixth in the 100. He was regional champ in the 200 while taking third in the 100. As fate would have it, however, he was injured and unable to take part in the state meet.

Patterson and the Penguins were a productive football fit. He started three seasons at Youngstown State, gaining second team All-Ohio Valley Conference honors as a senior. He finished his Penguin career with 73 catches for 1,300 yards and seven TDs. At the time of his graduation, he ranked second in all-time consecutive games with a reception (27) and 17th in career receiving yards.

His college production spawned a professional grid career in the Canadian Football League. He played four seasons with Montreal and was named the Alouettes' Rookie of the Year in 1983. Patterson had 76 career catches with Montreal for 980 yards and seven TDs.

Patterson ended his pro career with Saskatchewan, leading the Eastern Conference in punt return average.

Pete Gongola (Athlete - 1950s)



Pete Gongola (Benwood Union High School, Class of 1954). He was an honored three-sport Ironmen athlete and the most acclaimed of the 12 Gongola brothers who played sports for the old Marshall County school. The 6-foot, 195-pounder led Union to five OVAC titles in there sports — two each in football and basketball and one in baseball plus a state football largest class runner-up finish as a senior.

In football, he was a two-way standout end and kicker who earned first team All-OVAC Class A, first team All-Valley "Big School" co-captain, and first team largest class All-State. He led the Ohio Valley with 9 TD catches as a senior and, along with 13 PAT kicks and 67 points, second in OV Class A. He also was cited as a top defensive performer.

In basketball, he was named captain of the W.Va. All-Star team which played the Ohio All-Stars in 1954 at Madison Gym on Wheeling Island.

Baseball was his best sport, however. The all-stater opted for pro baseball, with the Cleveland Indians' farm system, after high school and played 13 years (1955-67) in the minor leagues. The catcher played 1,025 games with a .265 career batting average. He advanced to the highest Class AAA competition with Portland in the Pacific Coast League and with Dallas-Fort Worth in the American Association. He retired in the California Angels' system. He is deceased.

Leon Jenkins (Athlete - 1960s)



Leon Jenkins (Weir High School, Class of 1968). A three-sport Red Rider letterman in football, baseball and basketball, he led football teams to 8-2 and 7-3 records his last two years at quarterback.

As a senior, Jenkins recorded nearly 1,500 all-purpose yards in 10 games, rushing 109 times for 825 yards and 15 TDs; scoring 103 points; and completing 27 of 65 passes for 525 yards and four TDs. He also played defensive back and returned kicks. In a season opening 26-19 win over Follansbee, he tied a school record with four TDs, including runs of 86 and 75 yards,while rushing for 225 yards. H rushed for 154 yards in a loss to Steubenville, then ranked No. 1 in Ohio, and he had a 94-yard quarterback sneak TD in a 4-28 win at Moundsville.

Career-wise, he scored 182 points (28 TDs), which was then No. 2 in the Weir record books. He also rushed for 1,436 yards, possibly the Ohio Valley record for a quarterback at the time.

As a senior, he earned first team All-Valley "Big School", All-OVAC Class AAA, All-Mountaineer League and third team All-State.

Jenkins was a standout baseball outfielder and was a first team, 20-player all-class All-Valley choice in the first selections by The Intelligencer. He batted over .300 and was cited as a top defensive player.

The 5-foot-11, 165-pounder earned a football scholarship to West Virginia University where he was four-year starter at cornerback -- three on the varsity team. He was the only sophomore on a 10-1 record 1969 team which won the Peach Bowl, 14-3, vs. South Carolina. He started on three varsity teams with a combined 25-8 record and was a team co-captain as a senior.

Career-wise, Jenkins intercepted 10 passes with one TD. He also was a regular punt returner for three seasons with two TD returns.

He was drafted in the 16th round by the Detroit Lions and played four games in 1972. He also played one season (1975) for the Shreveport (La.) Steamers in the World Football League. In 12 games, he had six pass interceptions and returned punts and kickoffs.

Ron Sismondo (Athlete - 1970s)



Ron Sismondo (Mingo High School, Class of 1978). Sismondo was one of the finest hurlers ever to grace the mound in Ohio Valley history. In addition, he was also a sparkling quarterback for the Indians, Sismondo's pitching prowess was so superb that he earned a scholarship to the University of Arizona, where he became the only OVAC product to play for an NCAA Baseball World Series champion when the Wildcats turned the trick in 1980.

The crafty southpaw was a two-time All-Valley and All-OVAC baseball honoree.

Sismondo authored a 7-2 mound mark as a senior for an 11-9 Mingo squad, with one of his two blemishes being a 1-0 loss to Jewett-Scio. He yielded only two hits in that district championship setback.

Sismondo struck out 93 batters in just 53 innings of work that spring while compiling a miniscule 0.38 ERA.

He was also dominant during his junior campaign, leading the Ohio Valley in strikeouts that spring, fanning 94 batters in 50 innings to go with a 1.01 ERA. He had a 5-2 mark for the 8-8 Indians.

He was also lethal with the bat, finishing third in the Ohio Valley via his .500 batting average (29-of-58). He had six doubles, one triple and one home run.

While he dominated on the diamond, Sismondo also excelled on the gridiron.

He earned All-Valley and All-OVAC honors for his sparkling play at quarterback. He was the top small-school passer in the Ohio Valley as a senior, completing 65-of-142 passes for 870 yards and seven TDs.

At the University of Arizona, Sismondo was a record-setting, four-year letterman (1979-82) and starting pitcher. The star of that team was outfielder Terry Francona, who was named World Series MVP and first team All-America. Sismondo crafted a sparkling 33-17 career record with nine saves to go with 46 starts while pitching 361 innings in 88 games. He set Arizona freshman year records of 11 wins, 121 innings pitched, 18 starts and seven complete games.

Sismondo was drafted twice -- by the Milwaukee Brewers in the 11th round in 1981 and by the Seattle Mariners in the 13th round in 1982. He signed with Mariners after senior season and played two years in Class A at Wausau, Wis. in Midwest League before returning to the Ohio Valley and becoming a high school administrator.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Shelly Carroll (Athlete - 1980s)



Shelly Carroll (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1988). Carroll was nothing short of a scoring machine during her Purple Rider days.

The 5-11 forward averaged 29.8 points and 10.6 rebounds a game in her senior season for Coach Larry Duck. Those lofty numbers earned her UPI Division II Ohio Player of the Year honors.

Carroll finished her sparkling prep career with 1,626 points, establishing a new school record for boys or girls. She was a second-team all-Ohio choice as a junior while being tabbed honorable mention in her sophomore season.

Carroll played in the Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association North-South All-Star Game and also competed in the International Cage Tournament in Budapest, Hungary in 1987.

The multi-talented athlete also was a standout volleyball performer for Ferry. She was selected to the all-OVAC team after her senior season.

Her prodigious scoring earned her a basketball scholarship to the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, where she because a four-year starter. She helped the Lady Mocs to three Southern Conference championships.

Carroll finished her career at Chattanooga with 1,013 points while also ranking first in school history via her 51.4 field goal percentage. She also ranks in the top 10 in UTC annals in games played (115), rebounds (560), field goals made (450) and free throw percentage (74.1). She was named first-team All-Southern Conference in 1992.

She was twice honored with the Outstanding Achievement Award by the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club (1989) and (1993).

Mike Gulan (Athlete - 1980s)



Mike Gulan (Steubenville Catholic High School,Class of 1989). Gulan was a three-sport star at Catholic Central, but baseball proved to be his future calling card.

He was first-team All-Valley, All-OVAC Class AAA and All-Eastern District his senior season in baseball, a campaign in which he batted .452 with five home runs, seven doubles, 25 hits, 15 RBI and 18 stolen bases in 19 attempts. The talented third baseman was named second team All-Valley as a junior.

In football, he was a second-team All-Valley honoree as a senior and earned honorable mention All-OVAC Class AAA in basketball.

His sparkling prep diamond career earned him a scholarship to Kent State University, where he excelled for three seasons before being selected in the second round of the Major League Draft (53rd overall pick) by the St. Louis Cardinals.

Gulan was named Mid-American Conference Player of the Year and second team All-America. He was first-team All-MAC as a junior and second team as a sophomore.

As a Golden Flash junior, Gulan led the MAC in hitting (.430), home runs (17), RBI (68) and triples (6). As a sophomore, he batted .311 with 11 homers. He batted .336 as a freshman.

Gulan was one of 90 players in the nation invited to the U.S. Olympic team tryouts in 1992. He was inducted into the Kent State Hall of Fame in 1999.

Gulan enjoyed a 13-year career (two in majors, part of 12 in the minors and one in Japan) from 1992-2004. He was a member of the Cardinals' major league club in 1997 and the Florida Marlins in 2001 and also signed with the Pirates in 2002 and White Sox in 2003.

He was also was a Steubenville American Legion Post 33 baseball standout.

Jamie Adams (Athlete - 1990s)



Jamie Adams (The Linsly School, Class of 1994). This former Cadets was instrumental, not only at Linsly, but throughout the Ohio Valley, in putting soccer on the map.

A four-year regular for the Cadets, Adams etched his name into lore at both at the prep and collegiate level.

When you consider that Adams led the state of West Virginia in scoring three times in his career, it's not hard to see why he gained such a laundry list of accolades. After scoring just seven goals as a freshman, Adams exploded onto the scene in 1991 by scoring 37 times. He went for 46 as a junior and 50 goals as a senior.

His 140 career goals is still a record at Linsly.

Adams was the first West Virginia athlete and OVAC player to garner Parade All-American honors in soccer. He was named All-American by National Soccer Coaches Association and was an ESPN/ McDonald's Scholastic Player of the Week in 1992.

Locally, Adams was named first-team all-OVAC three times, conference player of the year twice, first-team all-Valley three times and captained the squad twice. He was named first-team all-IPSL three times and IPSL Player of the Year as a senior.

After sifting through more than 30 offers, Adams elected to continue his career at Princeton University. He was a four-year starter with the Tigers and served as a team captain in 1997. He was also named to the all-Ivy League team that season.

Adams was also heavily involved with the United States Olympic Development Program. He was a member of the Region I team which played in Europe. He was also selected for the Region I pool five times and was a part of six state ODP teams.

On top of his prep and collegiate exploits, Adams shined at the club level, too. He a part of teams that won six Snicker's Cup state championships and was in the regional final four times. Adams was inducted to the West Virginia High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2012.

Scott Coyne (Athlete - 1990s)



Scott Coyne (Bellaire High School, Class of 1994). This former Big Reds' point guard was a wizard with the ball in his hands for OVAC Hall of Fame coach Gene Ammirante during his prep career.

While it was in basketball where Coyne achieved some of his greatest moments, his success wasn't limited there. He was a three-sport standout for the Big Reds, shining in track and football as well.

Coyne finished his prep career with 1,051 points, including a 19.1 points per game average as a senior. He did more than score the ball. He stuffed the stat sheet to a tune of nine assists and seven rebounds a game as he led the Big Reds to their first undefeated regular season and an eventual 21-1 record.

During his junior season, Coyne averaged 20.4 points a game. He netted his career high of 43 points that season against St. Clairsville. The Big Reds finished 17-4 and won the OVAC that season.

Coyne ranks in the top 10 in numerous Bellaire categories, including 3-point shooting (44 percent), free-throw percentage (77 percent), steals (141) and his points are the 15th best.

Coyne earned all-everything as a senior. He was all-Eastern District, District 12, OVAC and all-Valley and was named to the McDonald's All-American and Street and Smith's All-American honorable mention lists. He was also named one of the top 25 players in Ohio by USA Today and played in the Ohio North-South All-Star Game.

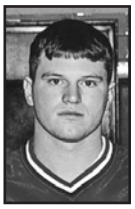
As a wide receiver, Coyne was the go-to guy for the Big Reds during his three-year career. He finished with 1,764 yards. Included was a 1993 campaign in which he caught 61 passes for 967 yards, which ranks seventh in BHS history. Coyne was named to the all-Ohio first team. He was also named all-OVAC and all-Eastern District.

On the track, Coyne qualified for the state track and field championship meet twice in the 300 intermediate hurdles. He was a multiple-time OVAC placer in that event as well as running key legs on relay teams for the Big Reds.

He died tragically in a plane crash in 2002 at just 26 years old. At the time of his death, he was one of the area's rising basketball officials.

Coyne was inducted to the District 12 Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2015. The Scott Coyne Memorial Scholarship exists at Bellaire High School to honor his legacy.

Tyler Engle (Athlete - 2000s)



Tyler Engle (Fort Frye High School, Class of 2007). It didn't matter the season for this former Cadet multi-sport standout because he shined brightly. The winner of 11 varsity letters Engle really stood out on the basketball court and baseball field where he earned eight of those monograms.

It was baseball where Engle earned his opportunity to compete collegiately at The Ohio State University. Playing for the late Sonny Bidwell, Engle hit .502 for his career with 12 home runs and 117 RBIs in leading the program to a 74-25 record.

As a senior, Engle batted a robust .515 with four homers and 34 RBIs en route to earning all-Ohio first team honors and was chosen for the OVAC, Eastern District and Mizuno All-Star Games. He was named first-team all-Eastern District four times and was the player of the year as a senior. Twice, Engle was named first-team all-OVAC and was the Class 2A Player of the Year as a senior. He earned all-PVC four times.

On the basketball court, Engle left a lasting mark as he helped Coach Dan Liedtke's program to 65 victories by scoring 1,760 career points. He grabbed 400 rebounds, passed out 240 assists and had 130 steals during his career. He also drained 329, 3-point goals, which is the Ohio state record.

During his senior season, Engle averaged 19.8 points en route to first-team all-Ohio, all-Eastern District, all-OVAC. all-Pioneer Valley Conference and all-District 12. He also took part in the Ohio North-South and OVAC All-Star Games. That followed up a junior campaign in which he was named third-team all-Ohio. He was actually listed on the all-state team each year of his career.

Engle also lettered three times in football, but elected not to play his senior season.

After high school, Engle elected to become a Buckeye. He lettered four times as a shortstop. He played in 193 career games and batted .256. He had four home runs, 82 RBIs and had 155 hits. When he finished his career, he ranked second in OSU history with 189 starts.

With his playing days behind him, Engle entered coaching. He coached at Ohio Valley University, where he finished his Master's Degree, Elon University and Marietta College. He's currently the baseball coach at Meadowbrook High School.

Liz Repella (Athlete - 2000s)



Liz Repella (Steubenville High School, Class of 2007). Whether it was at Big Red or West Virginia University, this standout basketball player simply scored the ball.

The multi-talented combo guard earned all-Ohio honors four times during her prep career. She was named first-team as both a junior and senior. Repella was named the state's player of the year, averaging 26.9 points a game as a senior

She was named to the third team as a freshman and second team as a sophomore.

She is the all-time leading scorer in Steubenville history -- regardless of gender -- with 2,065 points.

Along with her state accolades, she was named all-OVAC four times and first-team all-Eastern District four times, garnering player of the year as a junior and senior.

Repella, who was also a multi-year letter winner in soccer, was ranked the 63rd best player in her class as a senior, which garnered several Division I offers. She eventually settled on becoming a Mountaineer.

At WVU, Repella lettered four years and scored 1,612 points, grabbed 712 rebounds. She also collected 207 steals, passed out 162 assists and blocked 76 shots.

She was named first-team all-Big East as a junior and senior and was just the second WVU female to garner first-team honors in back-to-back seasons.

Repella was an honorable mention all-American after her senior season in which she helped lead West Virginia to a 24-10 record and a second-round NCAA Tourney appearance. During her final season in Morgantown, Repella led the team in 12 statistical categories.

All told, she played in 134 games, which is the most in WVU history, and she was part of 96 victories. Her college point total was seventh best in WVU history at the time of her graduation.

Away from athletics, Repella was a standout student. She graduated with a degree in exercise physiology and a GPA of 3.96. She was a representative on the WVU Student-Athlete Advisory Committee. She also received the Big East Scholar Athlete Sports Excellence Award and was an Academic All-American.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Class of 2021

OVAC Hall of Fame

Sponsored by Robinson Auto Group

Rich Wilinski (OVAC 'Contributor')



Rich Wilinski (Follansbee High School, Class of 1955). He enjoyed an outstanding 56-year career in education and has worn many hats including coach, administrator and television analyst for local high school football.

Wilinski was a head football coach for 19 years at four schools from 1965-85 with a combined record of 121-56-9. His first assignment was at Wayne (1966-67) which merged into Wintersville (he was an assistant to Bob Kettlewell in 1968-69); then to Toronto (1970-76), Steubenville Catholic (1977-84) and Buckeye South (1985).

His 1974 team at Toronto became the school's second unbeaten team and Wilinski was selected the OVAC Coach of the Year and the first recipient of the Dapper Dan Club's Robert McKelvey Memorial Award. His is also a member of the Ohio Valley Football Coaches Hall of Fame.

Wilinski began his career as the basketball coach during the final three seasons (1962-64) of Follansbee St. Anthony, winning the W. Va. Catholic Tournament Class A crown in his first season. He also coached boys' basketball at Wayne for three years and had a combined 52-9 record with one Class A Sectional title.

He has been a TV analyst for Ohio Valley high school football games for WTOV-TV9 for nearly three decades.

As an athlete, Wilinski was a three-sport regular (football/basketball/baseball) at Follansbee, played on the Blue Wave's unbeaten state championship team in 1954, setting up a TD with an interception and kicking the game-winning extra point in a 7-6 victory over Barboursville to snap that school's 28-game winning streak. He was named first team all-W. Va. Class A, all-OVAC and all-Valley "Big School."

Wilinski attend the University of Florida on a football grant, but returned home and played at West Liberty State College.

Kim Clifford (Coach)



Kim Clifford (Bellaire High School, Class of 1972). Clifford cut his coaching teeth as an assistant at Bellaire under Mark Matz and Gene Ammirante before taking the head coaching position at Cadiz where he spent six years and posted a 90-48 record and won the OVAC Class AA championship in 1986.

He then moved on to St. Clairsville where he spent the next 27 seasons (1991-2018), amassing a 372-234 record to boost his career total to 461-282 over 33 years as a head coach.

At St. C., Clifford led the Red Devils to two OVAC crowns (2012 and 2013) and six Buckeye 8 titles; eight sectional championships, two district championships (2012 and 2013) and one regional title (2012) to earn the school's only OHSAA "Final Four" berth (St. C. lost to Elida, 61-27, in the Division II State Semifinals).

In addition to receiving several East District and District 12 honors, Clifford coached in the OHSBCA North-South All-Star Game in 2000; was named the Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association Coach of the Year in 2008; was a finalist for the OVAC Coach of the Year award in 2012 and 2013. He also served as president of the District 12 Basketball Coaches Association.

He received the OHSBCA's Bob Arnzen Award, given to a coach who devoted 20 consecutive years or more of service to the same school and for their loyalty and commitment to basketball, in 2014; and was inducted into the St. Clairsville High School Athletic Hall of Fame in 2019 and the District 12 Basketbacll Coaches Hall of Fame in 2021.

Clifford is a 1972 graduate of Bellaire High School where he was captain of the basketball team and played in the OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic. He attended Urbana University and graduated from West Liberty State College, earning master's degree from West Virginia University.

In addition to coaching basketball, he also spent time as the head track coach and as an assistant

Jerry Narcisi (OVAC 'Family')



Jerry Narcisi (Shadyside High School, Class of 1967). He has been involved with the OVAC for more than a quarter of a century, displaying a passion for the youth of the Ohio Valley and the conference. Narcisi has been a member of the OVAC Executive Board since 2000, including serving as president from 2005-2007.

He's also been extremely active with track and field, serving on the OVAC Track Committee for more than 25 years in several capacities including meet director and head of the rules committee. He also served as the referee when the OVAC Cal Giffin Track Championships took place in Bellaire and Shadyside.

Narcisi is a charter member of the Shadyside Relays Committee, serving as chairman for 16 years. He's also been a registered track official in Ohio since 1972, working in various capacities at the district and regional level countless times.

Narcisi is a trustee of the Shadyside High School Sports Foundation and belongs to countless professional organizations. He has served in various roles (teacher, supervisor, director) at the Belmont-Harrison Vocational School including superintendent from 1981-90; was superintend of Shadyside Local Schools from 1990-2006; and interim superintendent of the Bridgeport Exempted Village School District in 2009. He is retired but still serves as a consultant and facilitator for several local schools.

He received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Technology & Manage from Ohio University in 1971 and a Master's Degree in Vocational-Technical Education from The Ohio State University in 1974, completing his Superintendent License Coursework at Franciscan University and the University of Dayton in 1981.

Scott Nolte (Media)



Scott Nolte (Wheeling Park High School, Class of 1990). He has worked at WTRF-TV7 since 1993, serving as Sports Director since 1996.

During his tenure, TV7 has won numerous awards including "Outstanding Sports Operation," "Best Regularly Scheduled Sportscast" and "Best Play-by-Play" in both West Virginia and Ohio.

Nolte serves as Master of Ceremonies for the annual OVAC Banquet of Champions which honors the conference team champions and awards a host of scholarships to area athletes each May at WesBanco Arena in Wheeling. He's also a regular contributor at the George Strager "Evening with the Stars" Banquet held in conjunction with the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game.

He also worked as play-by-play announcer and sideline reporter for the West Virginia "Super Six" State Football Championships from 1996-2004.

The co-host of West Virginia University football's "Mountaineer Game Day", he also teaches part-time at Wheeling Park High School in the TV and Radio Career Tech Education Department.

Nolte has also worked at radio stations Eagle 107, WEEL FM 95.7 and WKKX AM 1600.

Nolte, who attended West Liberty and graduated from West Virginia Tech, is an avid fan of West Virginia University football and Cleveland Indians baseball.

Robert 'Bubba' Kapral (Coach)



Robert 'Bubba' Kapral (St. John Central High School, Class of 1974). What Kapral accomplished in one sport was enough to land him in the "Hall," but he doubled down by getting it done in two sports as a highly-successful track and basketball coach.

In track, Kapral led St. John's to the pinnacle on the girls' side not once, but twice by winning the OHSAA Division III State Championship (2007/2008) on the heels of back-to-back runner-up finishes the two previous years (2005/2006). Overall, he coached 47 state place-winners, including 39 on the girls' side and nine on the boys' side.

During his 21-year track tenure, the Irish captured 13 OVAC Class A team titles (girls – 1991, '92, '93, 2002, '03, '04, '05, '06, '07, '08, '09; boys – 1991, 2009).

Kapral was a two-time OVAC Overall Coach of the Year (2008/2009); the OVAC Cal Giffin Memorial Track Service Award recipient and he was inducted into the Eastern District Track and Cross Country Coaches Association Hall of Fame (2019).

In hoops, after assisting Kim Traversa Appolloni for six years and being a part of five OVAC titles, he elevated to the head coaching post and enjoyed 25 years of hardwood success with a sparkling record of 391-176.

During that time, the Lady Irish captured nine OVAC Class A championships (1995, '96, '99, 2000, '01, '06, '07, '08, '16) and reached the OHSAA Division IV Regional Tournament in 2000-01 when SJC posted a school-record 23-2 record. Kapral was named the AP Division IV Co-Coach of the Year in 2000 and he was named District Coach of the Year five times.

Also tabbed the OHSBCA Girls' Basketball Coach of the Year in 2007, Kapral coached in the OVAC Samuel A. Mumley All-Star Basketball Classic four times; coached in the OHSBCA North-South All-Star Basketball Classic in 2002 and the Pepsi District 12 Basketball All-Star Classic in 2016. He has received the OVAC Rich Saffield Girls Coaches Award (2012) and the OHSBCA Bob Arnzen Award.

In addition to his coaching success, Kapral – a 1978 graduate of Bethany College with a B.A. in Communications and a four-year letterman on the Bison track squad – is a member of the OVAC Hall of Fame Committee, the OVAC Basketball Committee and the OVAC Coach of the Year Selection Committee. He's worked in various capacities at The Times Leader for more than four decades, and currently serves as Executive Sports Editor of the Times Leader/Wheeling News-Register/Intelligencer and since retiring from coaching he became a basketball referee.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Larry Deaton (Official)



Larry Deaton (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1964). Deaton was a mainstay as an official for more than 40 years, working countless high school matches in both Ohio and West Virginia; college matches at the NCAA and NAIA levels; and in freestyle wrestling.

His list of accolades is impressive, with the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference naming him the 1993 'Mr. Mat' award recipient and years later naming the conference's annual officials award in his honor – the Larry Deaton Official of the Year.

Deaton was also inducted into the Ohio Wrestling Officials Hall of Fame in 1994; was named the West Virginia Wrestling Official of the Year in 1997; the Wrestling USA National Official of the Year ini 2009; and he was the National Wrestling Hall of Fame's Ohio Chapter inductee in 2016.

As an athlete, he was a four-year letterman in wresting at Martins Ferry, winning an OVAC title in 1963 and an OHSAA District crown in 1964. Deaton was inducted into the Martins Ferry Wrestling Hall of Fame in 1998 and was chosen for the Martins Ferry Athletic Department's "Wall of Honor" in 2018. He was also a four-year letterman in football and a two-year letterman in track.

Deaton helped start the Ohio Valley Wrestling Club in the 1970s and headed Martins Ferry's flag football program in that same era, and he served as president of the Purple Rider Booster Club and on the Board of Directors of the Martins Ferry Recreation Center.

Ralph Anastasio (Athlete - 1950s)



Ralph Anastasio (Follansbee High School, Class of 1954). A three-sport Blue Wave athlete and do-it-all football player with a quartet of first team all-star honors, he earned a scholarship to West Virginia University where he lettered three years as a two-way back, kick returner and record-setting punter.

The triple-threat back led the Blue Wave to an 8-2 record his senior year, losing only to unbeaten and state runner-up Benwood Union by 13-12 and to 8-1 record Wheeling Central, the OVAC Class AA champion, by 7-6. He earned first team honors for OVAC largest Class AA, All-Valley "Big School", All-Northern West Virginia, and the largest All-State Class AA. As a senior, he accounted for 17 TDs including five on punt returns, one on a kickoff return, seven TD passes and he also intercepted five passes. He played in the Ohio-W.Va. All-Star game and a 13-0 W.Va. victory.

He also was a three-year letterman in basketball and baseball.

At WVU, he was a four-year football performer including three varsity seasons as a 5-foot-11, 165-pound multi-purpose back (starting right halfback, defensive back, kick returner, punter) on teams with records of 8-2, 5-5 and 7-2-1 and two Southern Conference titles. In the only tie, 6-6 vs. Virginia in 1957, he made a near-impossible catch on a 62-yard pass play to tie the score and also set a school record, which lasted 40 years, with a 78-yard punt. Career-wise, he had 141 carries for 569 yards, 20 receptions for 305 yards and a TD, 25 kick returns for 263 yards and averaged 37 yards a punt.

After college, he returned to the Ohio Valley and was a teacher-coach before retiring to his current home in Steubenville. He was head football coach at St. John's from 1960-62 and Toronto from 1964-69 including an 8-2 record in 1964.

Tony Jeter (Athlete - 1960s)



Tony Jeter (Weir High School, Class of 1962) -- He was a 6-foot-3, 225-pound four-sport, 11-letterwinning Red Rider athlete during a prime-time era in Weir High sports overall and football in particular when Weir won three state titles and lost only six games from 1957-61 under Hall of Fame coach Burdell (Jimmy) Carey.

Jeter, a four-year football letterman, was a starting defensive end on the 10-1 record Class AAA state title team of 1960 and a two-way end standout on the 10-1 record repeat state championship team of 1961 when he was selected first team All-State, All-Valley and All-OVAC. Weir routed Nitro, 40-0 and St. Albans, 26-7 in the two title games.

In baseball, Jeter won the team MVP award and was scouted by the Pittsburgh Pirates. He lettered three times in basketball and baseball and one year in track.

He accepted a University of Nebraska football scholarship and, after competing on the freshman team, was a three-year, 33-game starter at end on Cornhusker bowl teams - two Orange Bowl and one Cotton Bowl. In the 1966 Orange Bowl loss, 39-28, he landed two TD passes to tie a bowl record. Career-wise, playing on a running team, he landed 38 passes for 528 yards. The two-time All-Big Eight honoree, and team MVP as a senior for a 10-0 regular season team, earned first team All-America defensive honors by the American Coaches Association and second team by the two wire services as well as Academic All-America.

The Nebraska Football Hall of Famer was drafted in the NFL third round, 46th overall, by the Green Bay Packers and also by the AFL Oakland Raiders. Traded by the Packers to the Pittsburgh Steelers, he played three NFL seasons before a back injury halted his career.

He is the brother of OVAC Hall of Famer, and former U. of Iowa and Green Bay Packer star Bob Jeter,.

The Ohio Valley Athletic Conference is the largest high school conference in the USA!

Dr. William 'Bill' Welker (Official)



Dr. William 'Bill' Welker (Shamokin (Pa.) High School, Class of 1965). No one has been involved as an official or promoted the sport of wrestling not only in the conference, but far beyond, more than the "doctor".

Welker officiated in the OVAC Ron Mauck Wrestling Tournament from 1980-91 and served as the rules interpreter from 1992-2017. He was also the OVAC Tournament's souvenir program coordinator and editor for 18 years (1979-96).

He received the OVAC's prestigious "Mr. Mat" award in 1991 and was tabbed the OVAC Wrestling Official of the Year in 2003.

Welker was the West Virginia Wrestling rules interpreter, clinician and supervisor of officials at the state tournament from 1989-2017 and the NFHS National Wrestling Rules Committee from 2012-2015.

He received the 2001 NFHS Mideast Section 2 Distinguished Active Official Award and the 2002 National Wrestling Official of the Year Award from Wrestling USA Magazine.

Welker was selected the 1987 and 2013 (with his son Rick) National Sportswriter of the Year by Wrestling USA Magazine for his "Mat Talk" column which appeared in a host of publications and was named that publication's West Virginia Wrestling Man of the Year in 2001. He was also tabbed the West Virginia Wrestling Sportswriter of the Year seven times.

He has also conducted numerous wrestling clinics over the years.

As an athlete, he was a three-time sectional and district champion; a two-time regional champion; the PIAA State Champion in 1963 and the state runner-up in 1965. He earned a wrestling scholarship to the University of Pittsburgh.

Welker served as head wrestling coach at Wheeling High (1970-72), Wheeling Central Catholic (1972-76) and Wheeling Park (1979-80).

Tom Bloom (Athlete - 1950s)



Tom Bloom (Weir High School, Class of 1959). He led the Red Riders to state championships in football and baseball, both under Hall of Fame coach Jimmy Carey, before earning a football scholarship to Purdue University where he was a four-year performer.

At Weir, he earned 11 letters in three varsity sports with multiple honors in football and baseball plus being a basketball regular. He led the Red Riders to a two-year football record of 20-1 and a state largest class championship as a junior. The 11-0 record team beat Fairmont Senior, 19-12 for the title at Wheeling Island Stadium. As a senior, OVAC champion Weir went 9-1, losing only to eventual state champion Parkersburg in the regular season finale. He earned first team All-State and All-OVAC and was selected captain of the "Big School" All-Valley team as a two-way back and kick returner.

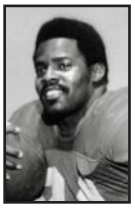
As a senior, he had a 95-yard kickoff return TD in win over Steubenville and a 96-yard rushing TD and 217 rushing yards vs. Follansbee. He ended the season with team-best 943 rushing yards. Career-wise, on balanced teams. he had 1,869 rushing yards -- second best at Weir at the time -- and scored 25 TDs and 151 points. As a junior, he returned a kickoff 81 yards vs. Wheeling.

In baseball, the outfielder was an all-state tournament selection as Weir captured the one-class state title with a 6-2 finals' win over East Bank, the state's top championship program at the time.

At Purdue University, he was a two-way, do-it-all halfback who was selected the outstanding back on the freshman team and three-year varsity letterman and two-year starter. He was the team's second top rusher and receiver as a junior and top team receiver (13 catches for 217 yards and two TDs) as a senior. He scored two TDs in a 17-6 win over Michigan State in 1962. He was a kick returner and defensive back (47-yard interception TD).

He was drafted by the Cleveland Browns in the 6th Round (No. 74 overall) and indicated he would sign with them, but was a victim of an automobile crash and passed away in 1963.

Mike Palmer (Athlete - 1960s)



Mike Palmer (Steubenville High School, Class of 1967) -- The 5-foot-10, 170-pound running back is one of only three Big Red stars to earn Ohio AP Back of the Year honors, joining OVAC Hall of Famers Harry Wilson and Zach Collaros. He was the featured back on two Ohio-ranked powers and earned two first team Associated Press largest Class AA All-Ohio honors plus two All-Valley "Big School", two All-OVAC Class AAA, and two All-Eastern Ohio honors. He was All-Valley co-captain as a senior when he led Big Red to a 9-1 record, losing only to Massillon, and ranked No. 4 in the state Class AA poll. As a junior, Big Red went 8-2 and was ranked No. 8 in the Ohio AP poll.

As a senior, he scored 126 points (18 TDs, 18 conversions) and rushed 149 times for 1,098 yards and landed 16 passes for 261 yards. Playing against top-caliber foes as a junior, he rushed 107 times for 882 yards, landed 17 passes for 292 yards, and scored 89 points on 14 TDs and 5 conversions.

He also competed in track and basketball. As a member of sprint relay units, he ran a leg on an OVAC meet record-setting 880-yard team which timed 1:31.1. Big Red won four straight OVAC Class AAA crowns from 1964-67.

Earning a football scholarship to Iowa State University, he was a two-year letterman, and starter, for the Cyclones while rushing 116 times for 443 yards and two TDs and landing 18 passes for 267 yards and two scores. He had an NFL tryout.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Pete Abuls (Athlete - 1970s)



Pete Abuls (Cambridge High School, Class of 1978) - Abuls was the second 1,000-point scorer in the history of Cambridge boys' basketball, finishing his career with 1,091 points.

The 6-6 dandy led the Bobcats as a senior with 543 points (a school record at the time), a 27.3 average, scoring in double figures

in all 21 games including six 30-point games, topped by 40 against New Philadelphia. Abuls led the Bobcats to three OHSAA District Tournament finals.

As would be expected, he received many post-season honors. Abuls was named first-team all-Ohio as a senior, joining Ohio State legends Clark Kellogg and Art Schlichter on that list. He was also the AP Eastern District Class AAA "Player of the Year" and a first-team all-OVAC Class AAAA and all-District 12 selection.

As a junior, he was an honorable mention all-Eastern District honoree when he scored 342 points.

Abuls was also a dynamic performer in track & field for the Bobcats.

The three-year letterman set what was then an OVAC record in the high jump with a leap of 6-6 and he also went 21-9 in the long

jump, helping the Bobcats to the Class AAAA championship. Voted the school's Ray Voltz Award winner as the top male athlete, he was also a two-year letterman in cross country.

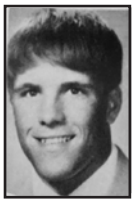
Abuls continued his athletic and academic careers at Tennessee Tech where he was a four-year letterman and the team captain for three years. He

finished his career with 1,187 points (a 12.2 avenge), 462 rebounds, 139 assists and 110 steals. He averaged 13.3 points as a freshman and

led the team at 12.1 as a sophomore. After an injury-plagued junior campaign, he again led the team in scoring at 14.5 as a senior. Abuls earned all-Ohio Valley Athletic Conference accolades following his senior campaign.

Abuls was inducted into the District 12 Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame in 2015.

Joseph 'JoJo' Blaha (Athlete - 1980s)



Joseph 'JoJo' Blaha (Wheeling Central Catholic, Class of 1983) — In a school where athletic tradition runs deep, Blaha rates with the Maroon Knights' all-time greats. He was a first-team all-state honoree in three sports - football, basketball and baseball.

While starring in all three sports, Blaha's prep baseball exploits were staggering.

He was a two-time all-stater (1981/1983). He batted better than .400 as a junior and senior, earning all-OVAC and all-Valley first-team plaudits. He also helped lead Wheeling American Legion Post 1 to a pair of state championships, highlighted by being selected in 1983 as the West Virginia State Player of the Year.

In football, Blaha was a stud running back and led the team in rushing as a junior and senior, eclipsing the 1,000-yard mark as a senior. His ball-toting efforts landed him all-OVAC, all-State and all-Valley plaudits.

The versatile and multi-talented Blaha was a four-year basketball performer for legendary coach Skip Prosser. The Knights captured the 1982 state crown, their first as a member of the WVSSAC. Central advanced to the state tournament again the following year. The savy guard was voted to the state all-tournament team in both 1982 and 1983. Blaha was a double-digit scorer in his final two years in hoops. He was an all-OVAC, all-Valley and all-State honoree both of those seasons.

Blaha opted to continue his baseball and academic careers at Valdosta State in Georgia, where he scripted another brilliant diamond resume, lettering all four years. He was a two-time All-American and two-time all-conference honoree during his collegiate playing days. The standout third baseman established eight school records. He was a .339 career hitter with 43 home runs, 52 RBI, 178 runs scored and 209 RBI. Blaha helped lead Valdosta to 157 wins in his career.

Daryl 'Boogie' Johnson (Athlete - 1990s)



Daryl 'Boogie' Johnson (Wheeling Park High School, Class of 1992) -- It didn't matter the sport or season for this Patriot, he simply shined.

While earning accolades in multiple sports, it was on the football field where Johnson left his biggest impact.

One of the best running games to ever suit up in the Ohio Valley, Johnson rushed for more than 4,100 career yards and 56 touchdowns. He saved his best for last, putting forth a highly memorable campaign in which he carried the ball 229 times for 2,062 yards and scored 31 touchdowns. During that senior season in 1991, Johnson had his biggest games against the biggest opponents. Against Morgantown, Johnson carried the ball 9 times for 231 yards and four touchdowns in the first half alone.

Following that season, accolades followed Johnson as he was named the recipient of the Kennedy Award, which goes to the top prep player in the Mountain State, as well as the Gatorade Player of the Year in the state. He was also named fourth-team All-American. Along with those, he was first-team All-State, All-OVAC and All-Valley.

Johnson was listed on the All-OVAC team in all three years of his career.

In Februrary of 1992, Johnson signed a National Letter of Intent to continue his football career at Oklahoma State University. He made an impact early, accumulating more than 600 yards of offense as a freshman, but saw his campaign cut short due to a knee injury. As a sophomore, he had gained 300 yards, but a collarbone injury ended his season and his junior year was also cut short with another knee injury.

On top of his football prowess at Wheeling Park, Johnson shined on the baseball field. He had a career batting average of better than .400, including two all-OVAC seasons as a sophomore and junior where he hit .455 and .420, respectively.

Don 'Kip' McLane (Athlete - 1970s)



Don 'Kip' McLane (Steubenville Catholic Central, Class of 1971) - McLane rates among the best hoopsters ever to suit up for the Crusaders.

He put together a dominating senior season, averaging 25.4 points and an amazing 20 rebounds per contest.

Not surprisingly, a slew of honors came his way following that memorable campaign. He was tabbed first team all-OVAC, all-Eastern District

and District 5 player-of-the-year. Moreover, McLane was selected by both UPI and AP as a first-team all-Ohio honoree. He was also chosen to play in the Ohio North/South All-Star Game.

His outstanding exploits also resonated on the national landscape as McLane was named to a pair of All-American teams: The U.S. Basketball Writers Association Coach and Athletic Magazine and the Surildst Growers A-A squad.

He ended his career at Steubenville Catholic – where he is a member of the school's Hall of Fame (Class of 1989) – with 1,008 points.

After his illustrious Crusader career, McLane received a basketball scholarship to Duquesne University - a national power in those days.

McLane was a three-year starter at Duquesne University, serving as team captain as a senior in 1975. With the Dukes, he tallied 861 points (12 ppg) , 586 rebounds (8.1 rpg) and 127 assists. He passed away in 2014 at the age of 61.

Carl Fodor (Athlete - 1980s)



Carl Fodor (Weir High School, Class of 1982) - Fodor was a prolific three-year starter at quarterback for the Red Riders. He set the school career passing record of 2,090 yards (it lasted until 2005) despite playing on three losing record teams and missing several games with injuries.

As a senior, he was sidelined from Weir's first three games with a collarbone injury. In seven games, he passed for 1,213 yards, completing 74 of 165 passes with 8 TDs for a 1-9 record team. In their win over Mount View (27-12), he passed for 269 yards, then second-best in school history. Fodor earned second-team Class AAA all-

state honors as well as all-Valley and all-Mountaineer League plaudits. He was selected to play in the W. Va. North-South All-Star Game in Charleston and quarterbacked the North (coached by Dave Cisar) to an upset victory.

Fodor also excelled on the diamond for the Red Riders. He was a three-year regular centerfielder who helped Weir earn a state Class AAA state tournament berth with section and regional titles including a 1-0 upset Region 1 semi-final win over John Marshall and OVAC Hall of Fame pitcher Chris Jones. He earned honorable mention largest Class AAA all-State plus all-Valley (all-class) second team.

Fodor went onto a record-setting career as Marshall University's quarterback. He ended his Thundering Herd career holding virtually every passing record in school annals. The talented quarterback completed 416-of-811 passes for 35 TDs. He established a Southern Conference record with his 6,627 passing yards.

Fodor's passing exploits at Marshall earned him the West Virginia Amateur Athlete of the Year Award (now Hardman Award). He is one of only seven OV prep products who have won the state's oldest award originated in 1933. The other six are already honored by the OVAC: Chuck Howley, Lee Patrone, Zach Amedro, John (Fuzzy) Filliez, Harold (Doc) Daugherty and Kenny Griffith.

Fodor signed a free agent NFL contract with the St. Louis Cardinals and was on the practice squad in 1986 before signing CFL contract with the Calgary Stampeders where he played two seasons. He then played a season with Chicago in the Arena League before ending his career with one season in Wheeling with Steel Valley Smash.

Fodor was inducted into the W.Va. Coaches Association Hall of Fame plus halls of fame at Marshall and Weir.

Josh Watson (Athlete - 1990s)



Josh Watson (Magnolia High School, Class of 1999) -- Regardless if it was track or cross country, this former Blue Eagle ran…and he ran fast.

Watson is one of the most decorated distance runners in Ohio Valley history, achieving impeccable success in both sports.

In his OVAC and West Virginia State Meet careers, Watson finished with 15 gold medals, including 14 individual titles - the most in Ohio Valley history.

In cross country, Watson became the first Magnolia harrier to win the West Virginia State Championship, helping his team to the state team title as well. He also won the regional title and finished second in the OVAC.

Watson didn't stop there. He won the regional and state championship as a junior and senior, too.

In the spring, it didn't matter the distance. Whether it was the 800, 1600 or 3200, Watson took on all comers. His junior season, he finished as the high scorer in the Class A/AA meet with 32.5 points. Those came via the state title in the 800, 1600 and 3200 and he anchored the champion 4x800 team. He won the 1600 and 3200 at the OVAC and finished as runner-up in the 800.

As a senior, Watson helped guide the Blue Eagles to the West Virginia Class A/AA state team title thanks to scoring 32 more points, which includes repeats in all three of the individual distance events and a runner-up finish in the 4x8. He was the OVAC champion in all three individual races and set the OVAC 3A record at the time at 1:59.05.

After high school, Watson signed to compete in both sports at William & Mary. He earned Academic All-American honors in both sports and a Phi Beta Kappa.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Leekycia Brown (Athlete - 2000s)



Leekycia Brown (Monroe Central High School, Class of 2005). This right-handed ace lettered in multiple sports during her time with the Seminoles, but it was in the softball pitching circle where she made her biggest impact.

Brown led the Seminoles to the 2004 Division III State Championship by pitching every inning of the 32-game season. In the state title game, against Wheelersburg, Brown pitched a complete game, striking out four and walking two in a 1-0 victory.

During that junior season, Brown finished with a 0.62 earned run average and an astounding 290 strikeouts. She pitched no fewer than 18 shutouts. She also shined at the plate.

As a junior, Brown guided the Seminoles to the regional championship game and batted .455. For her career, she was a .354 hitter.

All told, during her prep career, Brown finished with a 91-16 record, 900 strikeouts and just 49 walks. She pitched nine no-hitters and five perfect games. At the time of her graduation, she held the Ohio record for consecutive innings pitched without allowing a walk at 76.

Obviously, plenty of accolades followed Brown. She was a first-team All-Ohio selection as a sophomore and junior. She earned second-team accolades as a freshman and honorable mention as a senior. She was named All-OVAC first team four times and was the Eastern District and OVAC Player of the Year as a sophomore and junior.

Her prep exploits earned a scholarship to Norfolk State University where she competed for four seasons. As a freshman, she was named the team's Rookie of the Year after leading the squad in hitting (.339) and ERA (2.68). As a junior, she was named to the conference's All-Academic Team and finished 10-9 in the circle with a 3.07 ERA. She was named the team's MVP following the season.

Along with softball, Brown lettered in basketball for the Seminoles, earning all-OVAC honors.

Natalie Perzanowski (Athlete - 2000s)



Natalie Perzanowski (St. John Central High School Class of 2008). Distance running -- whether it was track or cross country -- was the way of life for this former Lady Irish standout.

Perzanowski was a key cog in the Lady Irish track team's four-year run of dominance that saw them win two state championship, two state runner-up trophies and four consecutive OVAC titles.

All told, she claimed seven state-level medals in track, including winning the 1600 and 3200 meter run state titles in 2006. She also has a trio of bronze medals in her collection along with a fifth and seventh in the 4x800 during 2008 and 2006, respectively.

At the OVAC Championship, Perzanowski finished with 14 conference titles, winning four golds as a sophomore and senior.

After her sophomore season, she was named the Eastern District's Female Athlete of the Year.

In cross country, Perzanowski qualified to the OHSAA State Meet four times and earned all-Ohio in three of those appearances. Her best finish came in 2007 when she crossed the line in third. She was fourth as a junior and eighth as a sophomore.

She was twice (2005, 2006) the overall OVAC champion and in 2004 and 2007 won the Class 1A/2A title.

Perzanowski was named Eastern District Athlete of the Year for Division III in both 2005 and 2006.

Along with her exploits on the track and CC course, she was a three-time Academic All-Ohio honoree in both sports.

While distance running was where she really made her presence felt she was also an impact performer for the Lady Irish basketball program during her four years. She scored 991 career points, had 388 steals, passed out 306 assists and pulled down 297 rebounds.

She was three times listed as first team All-Eastern District and All-OVAC, while helping to lead her team to three OVAC titles. She was second-team All-Ohio as a junior and was named The Intelligencer Sophomore of the Year in 2006 and twice was District 12 Player of the Year in 2006 and 2007.

After high school, Perzanowski went to the University of Toledo to continue her running career.

Class of 2022

OVAC Hall of Fame

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Henry 'Hen' Healy (OVAC 'Contributor')



Henry (Hen) Healy (St. John Central High School, Class of 1944). He enjoyed success as a head coach in two sports at two conference schools – St. John Central and Paden City – amassing an overall football record of 117-52-3 and a basketball record of 151-48 and is one of only two OVAC-era coaches who won state championships in both sports (the other was Hall of Famer Burdell "Jimmy" Carey of Weir High.

Healy was at St. John Central from 1954-57, coaching the school's only perfect-record football team (9-0 in 1956) which was led by Hall of Fame running back Joe Maroon. He was named OVAC Coach of the Year in 1957. His three-year record with the Irish was 19-7. He was also head basketball coach three years at SJC, winning the OVAC Class A championship in 1956 and posting a three-year record of 39-18.

He moved on to Paden City, coaching there from 1957-1971, guiding the Wildcats to early successes in both football and basketball. In football, he coached 15 years with a record of 98-45-3 with three unbeaten regular seasons and three West Virginia Class A championship game appearances. The Wildcats won their first state crown in 1970 after losing in the finals twice to a powerhouse Monongah squad led by the likes of Kerry Marbury and Nick Saban. Healy's 1959 and 1963 teams were unbeaten, but they didn't compete in the two-team state playoffs. His 1966 team went 9-0-1, but again didn't make the playoffs. Among the Wildcat stars of the time were future Syracuse back Dennis "Dink" Blatt; future WVU backs Mike Nelson and Larry sine; and Arcelius "Ace" Lyle, brother of future Chicago Bears' defensive back Garry Lyle. In basketball, he coached Paden City to a six-year record of 112-30, highlighted by the school's first West Virginia Class A state title in 1960. The 23-4 record team was led by Marshall University recruit Walter "Nook" Smittle. None of his six Wildcat teams won less than 15 games. Healy also served as Paden City's athletic director and principal.

He played football and basketball at St. John's, then served in the U.S. Army during WWI before attending West Liberty State College where he was a four-year letterman in two sports, graduating in 1951. He was a standout at fullback and defensive back under Coach Joe Bartell and a forward on the basketball team. He was inducted into the West Liberty Athletic Hall of Fame in 1984 and the Wetzel County Hall of Fame in 2019. He passed away in 2003 at the age of 76.

Dr, Dianna Vargo (OVAC 'Family')



Dr. Dianna M. Vargo (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 1977). A true "goodwill ambassador" of the conference, Dr. Vargo has the distinction of being the first female member of the OVAC Executive Board when she came aboard in 2001, and she remains the only female more than 20 years later. She also served two years (2007-08 and 2008-09) as president of the board.

Dr. Vargo has done yeoman work as chairman of the George Strager "Evening with the Stars" Banquet at \Wheeling Park's White Palace, an event showcasing the players, coaches, cheerleaders and Queen of Queen candidates participating in the annual OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game.

The OVAC Varsity Board was also the brainchild of Dr. Vargo. The premise of the Varsity Board – which includes two students (one boy, one girl) from a majority of the conference schools – is "empowering student-athletes to promote leadership, character and knowledge" and includes discussions on various topics such as sportsmanship and community involvement.

Dr. Vargo is a 1981 graduate of Ohio University with a Bachelor of Arts and Sciences in Mathematics. She earned a Master of Arts in Science/Mathematics Education from Wheeling Jesuit College in 1987, a Master of Arts in Education Administration from West Virginia University in 1993 and a Doctoral in Educational Leadership from West Virginia University in 2009. She spent more than three decades with Ohio County Schools, first as a math teacher and track/cross country coach at Wheeling Park High School in the early 1980s; served as assistant principal and then in 2001, she became high school principal at Park; assistant superintendent in 2005 and then in 2009, she was appointed the Deputy Superintendent of Ohio County Schools. In 2012, Dr. Vargo was named Superintendent of Ohio County Schools, serving in that capacity until 2016.

A resident of Wheeling, she also serves on the City of Wheeling Hall of Fame Board and is a member of the City of Wheeling Municipal Civic Service Commission. Dr. Vargo currently serves as the Director of Graduate Education and Accelerated Certification for Teaching Programs at Wheeling University.

Seth Staskey (Media)



Seth Staskey (Shadyside High School, Class of 1998). There have been members of the Ohio Valley media with longer tenures than Staskey, but probably none more passionate about the conference and its athletic programs. In 23 years (and likely for another two decades or more), Staskey has reported on sporting events up and down the Ohio River on both sides, in every sport imaginable.

He started his journalism career in 1999 at The Times Leader, quickly elevating to the position of sports editor. In addition to articles, columns and photographs appearing in the eastern Ohio newspaper, his works also appear regularly in The Intelligencer, Wheeling News Register and The Herald Star. He is also a frequent guest sports commentator for WKKX Radio and WTRF-TV7.

Staskey is a member of the Ohio Prep Sportswriters Association, the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) Media Advisory Committee and a member of the OPSWA East District Football, Boys Basketball and Girls Basketball All-Star Selection Committee.

His direct involvement with the OVAC includes serving as a member of the Hall of Fame Committee, the Track Committee, the Golf Committee and the Basketball Committee; handling media releases for the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game and OVAC Samuel A. Mumley All-Star Basketball Classic; and he is the public address announcer for the OVAC Cal Giffin Track Championships at Red Devil Stadium in St. Clairsville.

Staskey also finds time to umpire softball from youth leagues through high school as a member of the Ohio Valley Board of Softball Umpires.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Dave Cisar (Coaches)



Dave Cisar (Bishop Donahue High School, Class of 1964). Cisar enjoyed a historic coaching career at Magnolia High School in New Martinsville, W.Va., collecting an incredible 1,051 combined victories in baseball and football – the most in OVAC history.

In 48 years as head baseball coach, Cisar posted an 893-440 record (most wins in OVAC history; second all-time in West Virginia) with nine OVAC tournament or regular season titles (1976, '80, '82, '94, '98, 2000, '01, '02, 09), 10 regional championships, one West Virginia Class AA State Championship (2006 with 24-7 record) and three state runner-up finishes (1984, 2003, 2013). His teams enjoyed nine 20-wins seasons and five 30-win seasons. Cisar was the 2007 West Virginia State High School Baseball Coach of the Year.

He went 158-107 in 24 seasons as head football coach with four OVAC titles (1981, '91,'92, '98); seven WVSSAC playoff appearances (1978, '81, '83, '86, '88, '92 and '93) and three state runner-up finishes (1981, '92 and '93). He coached in the 1979 OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game and the 1982 West Virginia North-South All-Star Football Classic. He was the 1981 and 1988 Intelligencer/Wheeling News Register Football Coach of the Year.

Cisar is a member of the West Virginia Baseball Coaches Hall of Fame (2012), the Ohio Valley Football Coaches Hall of Fame (2003), the Bishop Donahue Hall of Fame (2006) and the West Liberty University Athletic Hall of Fame (2021). He received the Carl R. Hamill Award from the Dapper Dan Club of the Upper Ohio Valley in 1993 and was named that group's Co-Man of the Year in 2009.

A second team all-state baseball player as well as the quarterback in football at Bishop Donahue, Cisar transferred to West Liberty State College after one year at Miami-Dade Junior College and was a three-year standout pitcher on the diamond (1967-69) and two-year captain.

The Hilltoppers were 1969 WVIAC champions and went 30-5 in league play during Cisar's three years on the diamond.

New Martinsville named the road near the athletic fields "Dave Cisar Way".

Mike Coyne (Officials)



Mike Coyne (St. John Central, Class of 1967). For more than four decades, the easily-recognizable and highly-regarded Coyne made his way up and down the basketball court as an official before finally hanging up his whistle following the 2020-21 season at the age of 71.

A 42-year active member of the Ohio Valley Board of Approved Basketball Officials (he's was awarded an honorary lifetime membership upon his retirement), Coyne worked primary in the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference, but officiated games throughout Ohio and West Virginia. All told, Coyne worked a total of 24 state basketball tournaments (17 in Ohio and seven in West Virginia) as well as countless sectional/district/regional level contests, OVAC Tournament games and OVAC Samuel A. Mumley All-Star Basketball Games

Coyne also refereed the highly-publicized match-up featuring LeBron James and Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary against Carmelo Anthony and Oak Hill in Columbus in 2002.

Coyne was honored with induction into the Ohio High School Athletic Association's Officials Hall of Fame in 2008. He was named the OHSAA Official of the Year in 1990; the District 12 Basketball Coaches Association Official of the Year in 1989 and the District 5 Basketball Coaches Association Official of the Year in 2019.

He was the first inductee into the Cancer Research Classic Hall of Fame in 2020, having worked at least one game in each of the first 12 years of the prestigious hoops event.

He received an Outstanding Achievement Award from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club in 1992 and was the recipient of the OVAC Robert Dawson Officials Award in 2021.

Jim Capito (Athlete - 1950s)



Jim Capito (Bellaire High School, Class of 1958). A school and Ohio Valley sprint and jump record-setter, he earned three All-Valley track honors including four events as a senior: 100-yard, 220-yard and 440-yard dashes and long jump.

As a senior, he set Big Reds' school records in the 220 (22.0), 440 (50.8) and in the long jump (23-10 1/2), the latter an Ohio Valley record which lasted 30 years until 1988. He was the individual top scorer in three major meets - OVAC, Bellaire Relays and the District meet qualifier for the Ohio state meet where a leg injury ended his prep career.

He set OVAC records in the 100, 220 and long jump. At the prestigious Bellaire Relays, he won the 100, 220 and set a meet record of 51.25 in the 440.

As a junior, the Big Red was All-Valley in three events and placed seventh in the 220 at the Ohio State Meet for All-Ohio honors. He also set an OVAC and Martins Ferry Relays 220 standard and set two Bellaire Relays records. He anchored a school-record 880-yard relay unit mark of 1:33.8.

In his sophomore season, he tied the 220-yard mark of 23.3 at the Bellaire Relays, the area's top invitational regular season meet during that era.

He also was a member of Big Reds' football and basketball teams.

His track exploits started as a freshman when he was the individual top scorer in the OVAC Freshman Meet by winning the 100 and 220 sprints, anchoring the winning sprint relay unit and placing second in the long jump.

Terry Depew (Coaches)



Terry Depew (Juniata (Pa.) High School, Class of 1969). This versatile coach spent more than a quarter century patrolling the sidelines of Lockhart Alumni Field on the Linsly campus in Wheeling and he was also the valuable right-hand man to a fellow Hall of Famer with the highly-successful Cadet baseball program.

Depew served as head football coach at Linsly for 26 seasons (1980-2005), putting together a 156-96-1 career record. That included the first three perfect record teams in the history of the private school which has a football history dating back to the late 1890s – 10-0 in 1986, 9-0 in 1987 and 10-0 in 1996.

Depew-coached squads had two lengthy winning streaks – a school record 26 straight (1986-88) and then 19 in a row (1989-90). He guided four teams to Ohio Valley Athletic Conference titles, winning in three different divisions – Class 3A in 1987, Class 2A in 1989 and Class 1A in 1996 and 2004.

He coached the West Virginia squad in the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game five times (1984, '87, '92, '97 and 2005). Depew – who coached three Hall of Fame gridders in Willie Clay, Eddie Drummond and Dan Stephens – received the Carl Hamill Award for coaches from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club in 1993. He was succeeded as Linsly's head football coach in 2006 by his son, B.J. Depew, who led the Cadets to their fourth unbeaten season (10-0) in 2011.

In the spring, Depew served as an assistant coach under Hall of Famer Gary Sprague, helping lead the Cadets to 13 OVAC championships.

In addition to his coaching, Depew – a native of Mifflintown (Pa.) and a 1973 graduate of Bucknell University where he was a three-year letterman on the Bison football team – served as Linsly's business manager and later as the assistant headmaster.

Edmund DiBacco (Officials)



Edmund DiBacco (Follansbee High School, Class of 1969). He began calling balls and strikes right out of high school and became a fixture on high school and college baseball diamonds for 34 years (1969-2002).

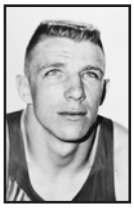
DiBacco worked at the highest level in West Virginia prep ranks, umpiring six WVSSAC State Tournaments in either Parkersburg or Charleston. He also had 31 West Virginia Sectional games and 20 Region 1 Tournament games to his credit along with eight Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Tournament games.

DiBacco also spent 31 years working college baseball contests, including the NCAA Division III Regional Tournament in Marietta and home games for countless teams including Bethany, West Liberty, Washington & Jefferson, Pitt, West Virginia, Kent State, Duquesne, Point Park and LaRoche.

He also had 32 years with American Legion action, including eight West Virginia State Tournaments, six National Legion Regional Tournaments and the 1991 American Legion World Series in Boyertown, Pa.

DiBacco umpired at the U.S Olympic Trials in 1992 in Millington Tennessee.

Roger Holdinsky (Athlete - 1950s)



Roger Holdinsky (Moundsville High School, Class of 1958). Football and track were his best sports but he competed in four sports as a Trojan and three sports at West Virginia University.

As a prep senior, he led the Trojans to a 9-1 record and was first team All-State Class AA, first team All-OVAC and co-captain of the All-Valley "Big School" selections. He led state largest class scoring with 129 points while "Mr. Everything", according to the All-State release, also passed, quick kicked, punted, kicked off and booted conversions, and played defense. He rushed for 1,106 yards on 163 carries (6.8 avg.).

The Trojan flash scored 19 TDs, added 125 PATs and passed for two TDs. He averaged 50.7 yards on seven quick kicks and intercepted eight passes on defense. He amassed 1,753 all-purpose yards in 10 games for rushing, passing, returns and interceptions.

He also was captain and top scorer as a senior basketball player. A four-year football and basketball performer, he also competed two each year in baseball and track, where he was a sprinter, jumper and pole vaulter.

The 5-foot-11, 160-pounder earned a football scholarship to West Virginia U., where he not only was a four-year performer (one year on the freshman team and three varsity letters as a two-way back and kick returner) and the Mountaineers' first varsity athlete to letter in three unrelated sports in several years.

He was a record-setting track sprinter-jumper with a school-record 21.5 seconds for 220 yards and 46-foot, 4-inches for the hop, step and jump. He won the Southern Conference 220 as a senior and was WVU's top track scorer his last two years. He also lettered in swimming and earned WVU's "Outstanding Minor Sports Athlete" award for 1962.

Despite his size, he was drafted by the Green Bay Packers in the 15th Round (210 overall pick) of the 1962 NFL Draft, but opted to return home for employment.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Bob Bruney (Athlete - 1960s)



Bob Bruney (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1960). He was a football-wrestling standout for the Purple Riders before joining the Ohio State University football program.

Known as "Bullet Bob", the 5-foot-9, 165-pound two-way football back averaged six yards a carry for the 10-0 record Ferry team which won OVAC Class AA honors in 1959 and was ranked ninth in the Ohio largest Class AA poll. He earned All-Eastern Ohio honors, second team All-OVAC and honorable mention on the largest Class AA All-Ohio team at defensive back.

In wrestling, he was a standout on the second and third wrestling teams at the school which were coached by Hall of Famer John (Corky) Vrotsos. As a junior, he was OVAC runner-up at 145 pounds before improving as a senior to OVAC 154-pound champion, district titlist and third place in the Ohio championships. The senior co-captain sported a 22-1 record.

He went on to play football at OSU where he earned two varsity letters as a defensive back after being a sophomore member of the 1961 team which went 8-0-1, won the Big Ten Conference title, and was ranked No. 2 nationally in both wire service polls.

After college, he served as Ferry's head wrestling coach (1976-77), football coach (1974-78) and athletic director (1985-94). He was a wrestling official for 17 years and is inducted into the Martins Ferry Athletic Hall of Fame and the school
Wrestling Hall of Fame. He received the OVAC's Mr. Mat award in 1995.

Bruney's Ferry football coaching record was 26-24 after coaching Ironton High (1966-71) to a 29-29-2 mark including 9-1 in his final season.

Courtney Snyder (Athlete - 1970s)



Courtney Snyder (Steubenville High School, Class of 1973). The 6-2, 190-pounder enjoyed a tremendous senior season for Big Red, playing in a power-laden league that featured teams such as Massillon, Canton McKinley, Warren Harding and Niles McKinley.

Snyder rushed for 1,039 yards and 11 TDs in nine games as a senior, a season in which Coach Abe Bryan's Big Red went 7-3. He also landed 13 passes for 161 yards.

The legendary Steubenville grid boss called Snyder, "the best all-around back I've seen this year, including our opponents."

Snyder garnered Class AAA All-State, All-OVAC, All-Valley and All-Eastern District grid honors.

He was also a standout for the Big Red hoop squad, earning first-team All-OVAC Class AAA plaudits.

The talented runner was recruited by a host of Division I schools, finally opting for Indiana University, coached by Lee Corso. Snyder scripted a tremendous career with the Hoosiers, earning a starting berth as a freshman.

Snyder hit the ground running in Bloomington, establishing school records for season and career rushing yards after his first three years. He was named first-team All-Big Ten as a sophomore after gaining 1,254 yards, and was tagged second-team All-Big Ten team as a junior after gaining 1,103 yards. As fate would have it, his senior season was cut short in his first game after just five carries for 8 yards.

His career totals are 631 rushes for 2,789 yards. He was a Hoosier grid co-captain as a senior. He was featured on the cover of a preseason national media guide, promoting All-America and Heisman Trophy Award candidates. Corso, now an ESPN Game Day celebrity, called Snyder, "the best running back I've ever coached."

Lori Heady (Athlete - 1980s)



Lori Heady (Buckeye Trail High School, Class of 1980). Heady was nothing short of dominating for Coach Dave Linn's basketball juggernaut.

The talented 6-foot center tallied 1,594 career points during her illustrious Trail career. Her final three campaigns saw Linn's charges compile a 71-4 record while advancing to the state tournament each season.

As a senior, Heady averaged 19 points and 12 rebounds per contest. She garnered first-team All-Ohio honors from both the UPI and AP. Both wire services named her the Class A Player of the Year.

During her final campaign at Trail, she held led her team to a sparkling 26-1 record. The lone blemish came in the state championship game, falling to Mansfield St. Peter's, 61-57.

She was a first-team All-OVAC, All-District 12 and All-Eastern District selection while also being named honorable mention All-American. She played in the OVAC and District 12 all-star games.

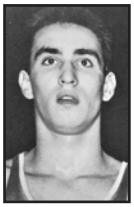
As a junior, Heady was an integral part in Trail capturing the coveted state basketball championship. The Warriors capped a sparkling 23-2 season by downing Holgate, 51-32, in the Class A title tilt. She was a first-team All-Ohio selection as she averaged 15 points a game. Heady was a third-team all-state honoree as a sophomore, a campaign in which she averaged 16.5 points per contest.

Trail amassed a superb 22-1 record in her sophomore season. The lone blemish came at the hands of Smithville, 41-38, in the Class A state tourney semifinals.

Heady continued her basketball career at the University of Charleston. She earned three letters on the collegiate level, netting 873 career point and 807 rebounds. Heady helped Charleston pocket three WVIAC regular-season crowns and two conference tournament championships. Charleston reached the NAIA National Tournament twice.

Heady was previously inducted into the East Guernsey/Buckeye Trail and District 12 Basketball Coaches Association halls of fame..

Gary 'Tony' Marvin (Athlete - 1960s)



Gary "Tony" Marvin (Wheeling High School, Class of 1962). One of the most honored prep athletes in Wildcat history, he earned nine letters as a three-sport regular and served as team co-captain in football, basketball and track.

In basketball, he scored 1,399 career points (22.5 average) in three seasons, one of the top two totals in school history. As a senior, he averaged 25.0 points and earned first team all-class "Big All-State" plus Class AAA and UPI All-State. He was first team All-OVAC Class AAA captain and co-captain of the All-City team. As a junior, he averaged 22.1 points on an 18-7 record team which won sectional and regional titles to qualify for the state event, where he was all-tournament. He earned first team All-OVAC, All-City and third team all-class "Big All-State". As a sophomore, he averaged 20.3 points and earned second team All-OVAC, honorable mention all-class "Big All-State" and was the only sophomore on the first team All-City.

In football, the 5-foot-11, 145-pound two-way back was selected Mr. Football and Wildcat team MVP as a senior when he was first team All-OVAC largest Class AAA, second team All-Valley "Big School", second Team All-State "AAA" and captain of All-City team. As a junior, he was second team All-OVAC Class AAA and All-City after being honorable mention All-City as a sophomore.

He blossomed as a senior in track when he was the leading scorer in the all-class OVAC Track Meet with 17 points, the second highest total in 20 meets at the time. He won the 440-yard and 220-yard sprints, placed second in the 100 and tied for third in the high jump. He also won titles at the City Meet, Steel Valley League Meet and the regional before placing fourth in the 440 at the W.Va. Class AAA State Meet in Charleston. He earned All-Valley track honors.

At Marshall, he was a basketball walk-on and competed on the freshman team.

After college, he was a long-time Ohio County basketball coach/assistant coach in junior high, junior varsity and at Wheeling Park High School.

Richard Summers (Athlete - 1970s)



Richard Summers (Sistersville High School, Class of 1978). This basketball standout put up some prolific numbers while performing for the Tigers, earning the nickname "Radar Richard."

Summers finished with 1,824 career points before heading off to Concord College where he played for three seasons.

The 6-2 dandy averaged a whopping 38.2 points per game as a senior (1978) the highest total since St. John Central's Allan Hornyak's 41.9 in 1969. As a result, he was the top scorer in the state that season.

That same season, Summers scored 74 points in a 113-88 win over Wirt County, He also tallied games of 59,
55 and 54 that winter.

He was accorded first-team honors for the All-W. Va. Class A, OVAC Class A and All-Valley Small School teams.

As a junior, Summers averaged 26.1 points, seventh best in the state. He led the Tigers to a 20-5 campaign, falling to Gauley Bridge in the state semifinals. The talented sharpshooter was first-team All-W. Va., All-OVAC Class A and All-Valley "Small School".

Summers enjoyed a sparkling sophomore season, averaging 17 points a contest as Sistersville compiled a 21-3 campaign. He was a third-team All-Valley selection.

Summers has also scripted a superb coaching resume, guiding the Tyler Consolidated volleyball team to much success.

Jeff Woofter (Athlete - 1980s)



Jeff Woofter (Oak Glen High School, Class of 1981). Woofter was a football, wrestling and track star for the Golden Bears. It was on the gridiron, however, where the 6-5, 238-pounder made his biggest impact, following in the footsteps of older brother, Jim, who starred at Tennessee.

Woofter was a three-year starter on the offensive line and linebacker for Oak Glen while also handling the punting chores. During his senior campaign, he was named first-team All-W. Va. in Class AAA, first-team All-Valley and first-team All-OVAC. The Golden Bears enjoyed a winning campaign that fall, marking just the fourth such season in school annals.

An exclamation point on his banner senior campaign was Woofter receiving the coveted Hunt Award, which is presented to the West Virginia All-Class Lineman of the Year.

He charted 120 tackles at linebacker as a senior while picking off three passes, covering three fumbles and forcing five others.Woofter topped all Ohio Valley punters with a 40.7 average.

As a junior, he was accorded second-team All-State honors while being tabbed first-team All-OVAC. He graded out at 90 percent blocking efficiency before grading 91 percent as a senior.

Woofter's bulk and athleticism lended themselves nicely to the basketball hardwood. He was a three-year hoop starter for the Golden Bears, netting more than 800 career points.

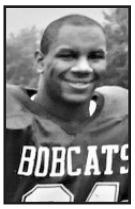
He was also standout in track and field, earning three letters. He qualified for the West Virginia state meet in the shot put and discus two years, placing third as a senior in the discus with a toss of 153-8.

After receiving his Oak Glen diploma, Woofter took his immense grid skills to Penn State University, choosing the Nittany Lions over some 50 Division I offers. Woofter was a two-year starter for Coach Joe Paterno in Happy Valley.

He is currently the superintendent for the Barbour County School District. He previously served as Hancock County sheriff.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Darin Ford (Athlete - 1990s)



Darin Ford (Cambridge High School, Class of 1990). Name the sport and this former Bobcat shined brightly.

All told, Ford earned 10 varsity letters for the Bobcats, including three in football and basketball and four in track and field.

It was in football where Ford made his biggest impact. Twice named to the Associated Press' All-Ohio first team in

Division II, Ford finished his career with 3,697 rushing yards, which currently ranks second in Cambridge High history. He had a single game of 388 yards against Zanesville, which still stands as a school record. Along with the aforementioned All-Ohio accolade, Ford was named All-Eastern District in Division II as a sophomore, junior and senior. The latter two seasons, he was named Offensive Back of the Year. He was also recognized as First-Team All-OVAC as both a junior and senior and he was named to the All-ECOL squad.

On the hardwood, Ford finished his career with 1,026 points, which currently stands as fourth-most in CHS history. He was named third team All-Ohio as a senior after a campaign in which he averaged 20 points a game. He was named second team All-OVAC Class AAAA and first team All-District 12 as both a junior and senior. Ford was a part of the first Bobcats team to play in the OHSAA Division II State Tournament in 1988 and was the first player to make a 3-point shot in the state tournament.

Speed was the name of the game in the spring for Ford as he shined in the short sprints. He ran 10.8 in 1990 in the 100, which tied Doug Donley's school record, and 22.34 as a junior in the 200, which is the third-best time. He ran in the Division II state meet as part of the Bobcats' 4x100 relay, which clocked a school-record time of 42.74. He was named the team's most outstanding track performer as a junior and senior.

Ford was named the recipient of the Cambridge High School Ray Volz Award, which goes to the school's most outstanding male athlete. He was also inducted as part of the charter class of the Cambridge High School Athletic Hall of Fame in 2017.

After his prep career, Ford went to the University of Akron where he played football and lettered twice. He played primarily on special teams in 1992, worked his way into the offensive rotation in 1993 by starting four games. He amassed 202 yards rushing, 194 yards receiving and saw action as a

punt returner. He was a team captain for the Zips in 1994 and when he ranked second on the team with 45 carries for 205 yards. He was named an Outstanding Senior Award winner and an Offensive Back of the Year award winner.

He played professional football in Europe and had a tryout with the Hamilton TigerCats of the Canadian Football League.

D.J. Duke (Athlete - 2000s)



D.J. Duke (River High School, Class of 2009). Although he shined in football, it was in the shot put circle where this former Pilot left his biggest imprint.

Duke wasted little time asserting himself into the Ohio Valley throwing scene. He launched the shot put to a mark of better than 50 feet as a freshman, something very seldom accomplished. He qualified for the OHSAA Division III state meet that season, but he didn't rest on his accomplishments.

During the winter, before his sophomore season, Duke experimented with learning how to spin, which for a shot putter is high risk, but high reward. He earned a return trip to the state meet after claiming the district title and the silver medal at the regional.

Continuing to work on the spin, Duke mastered the trade prior to his junior season. He put forth an undefeated campaign that culminated with his first Division III state championship, which he claimed with a mark of 60 feet, which was nearly four feet better than his nearest competitor.

Still, though, there was motivation for Duke, who found himself competing against the tape measure in most meets during his senior campaign. He won those competitions, too. Duke defended his state championship with a state meet and state-record mark of 68-8 1/4. That proved to be the fifth time he broke the state record his senior season.

All told, Duke won four OVAC and district championships and three regional titles. As of 2022, he still owns the state meet and state record.

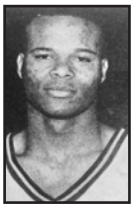
Duke competed in the Nike Outdoor National Track and Field Championships in 2009 and earned All-America status with a sixth-place finish.

On top of the shot put, he also worked himself into a solid discus thrower. He posted the top mark in the OVAC as a senior at 159-7. He also qualified to the state meet as a senior.

Duke turned down several Division I track offers to attend Division II power Ashland University. He qualified for the NCAA Division II national meet both indoor and outdoor and earned All-America honors in both.

Duke's prowess on the football field was also impressive as he was a four-year mainstay along both lines for the Pilots. He was named First-Team All-Ohio Division VI after his junior and senior seasons as well as Eastern District D-VI Defensive Player of the Year twice. He also took part in the OVAC All-Star Football Game.

Eric McGhee (Athlete - 1990s)



Curtis McGhee (Wheeling Central Catholic, Class of 1993). It didn't matter what the sport was, this former Maroon Knight is one of the most impressive to ever wear a Central uniform.

Though he lettered multiple times in three sports, it was on the football field where McGhee left his biggest impact.

McGhee tallied an impressive 4,487 all-purpose yards during two seasons as the chief option for the Knights. Included in that total are 3,883 yards rushing and he also scored 48 touchdowns.

As a senior, McGhee did the bulk of that damage. He actually led the entire OVAC and state of West Virginia in rushing yards en route to placing third in the voting for the prestigious Kennedy Award.

He trailed only OVAC Hall of Famer Mark Cisar and future Pro Football Hall of Famer Randy Moss in the voting. During that season, McGhee posted 2,690 of the aforementioned all-purpose yards. He rushed for 2,330 stripes and scored 30 touchdowns on 314 carries. Defensively, McGhee left his mark as well, tallying 66 tackles and six interceptions. He also punted with an impressive 38.7 yard average. During his junior campaign, McGhee accounted for 1,797 all-purpose yards in 12 games. He rushed for 1,453 yards and 18 touchdowns. Defensively, he posted 79 tackles and an interception.

Obviously, McGhee's fine seasons did not go unnoticed. He was named to the West Virginia All-State Class AA team, All-OVAC and All-Valley squads. He was a co-captain of the big-school squad as a senior. He earned all of the same accolades as a junior. Since his prep career ended, he was named to the Top 50 Ohio Valley Football Players of the last 50 years by the Wheeling newspapers.

On top of football, McGhee was a three-year mainstay in basketball and baseball. He earned All-OVAC, All-Valley and All-West Virginia honors in both sports. He also played in the OVAC All-Star Game in all three of his chief sports.

After graduation, McGhee accepted a scholarship to play at the University of Pittsburgh as a defensive back. He put forth an impressive career with the Panthers, lettering four times. He finished his career with 244 tackles, which still ranks in the top 25 in Pitt history. He served as a captain during the 1997 season.

Stephanie Morgan (Athlete - 2000s)



Stephanie Morgan (Barnesville High School, Class of 2009). The term 'greatest of all time' gets thrown around quite frequently. However, when it comes to Ohio Valley female distance running, the acronym GOAT is totally accurate.

Morgan arrived at Barnesville High after competing as an eighth grader and freshman in Clarkston, Mich. Her family moved back to the Ohio Valley in the summer of 2006 and as it pertains to distance running, records and awards, the rest is history.

Morgan wasted little time in asserting herself in the Ohio prep running scene. After finishing fifth in the Division III state cross country meet, Morgan basically never lost another race inside the state of Ohio.

All told, Morgan claimed eight OHSAA state championships. She won a pair of cross country titles in 2007 and 2008. She didn't just win those races, she ran away from the field. As a junior, Morgan broke the tape in 17:27.36, which was 61 seconds faster than her nearest competitor.

Morgan won three OVAC cross country titles, three district titles and three regional crowns. She also claimed the Nike Midwest Regional meet and went on to finish 16th at Nike Nationals. She was a finalist at the National Cross Country Foot Locker nationals as a senior.

As a senior, she won the state CC title with a time of 17:57 and was 38 seconds ahead of the runner-up finisher.

On the track, Morgan was even more dominant. After finishing state runner-up in the 1600 in Michigan as a frosh, Morgan didn't lose again. She won the 1600-meter run title as a sophomore, junior and senior. Her winning time as a sophomore was 4:45.21, which was a state and state meet record.

She claimed the 3200-meter run crown as a sophomore and then shifted to the 800 for her final two prep campaigns, but the distance didn't matter. She still dominated, running a 2:09.77 as a senior, which was a state and state meet record.

Morgan was named both Ohio's Gatorade Female Cross Country (2007 and 2008) and Track Athlete of the Year twice (2008 and 2009). As a senior, junior, she was an All-American in the 1500M thanks to a third-place finish at the USA Junior Nationals. As a senior, she won the mile at the prestigious Penn Relays in Philadelphia.

After high school, Morgan attended Baylor University. She ran in the NCAA Division I National Championships for the Bears as a freshman. She transferred to the University of Illinois after one season and had an impressive career there, too. With the Illini, she competed at the NCAA Outdoor Nationals in the 1500 in 2011; she was part of a Big Ten Indoor Track championship squad in 2013 and earned All-Big Ten acclaim twice, including a runner-up finish in the 800 during the 2011 indoor campaign.

OHIO VALLEY ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Teddi Jo Maslowski (Athlete - 2010s)



Teddi Jo Maslowski (Steubenville Catholic Central High School, Class of 2011). As it pertains to female hurdling in the Ohio Valley, very few, if any, have done it better than this former Crusader.

Maslowski put forth a career that won't ever be forgotten. After all, it included an amazing seven state championships, 15 total All-Ohio finishes, a Division III team state championship in 2011 and a perfect 16 of 16 in OVAC championships.

Though she did win an OVAC title in the 100-meter dash as a freshman,it didn't take long for Catholic Central coaches to realize that hurdles were going to be the keynote event(s) for Maslowski.

As a freshman, Maslowski got her feet wet at the state meet by finishing seventh in the 100 high hurdles and third in the 300 lows.

Maslowski returned in 2009 and claimed her first state championship, winning the high hurdles in 14.71. She was part of a state runner-up 4x200 team and also finished with silver in the low hurdles.

In 2010, Maslowski continued her domination in the high hurdles, skimming the flight in 14.44, which at the time was a state meet record. She then anchored the 4x200 team to a gold medal and made it a hurdle sweep with a 42.61, which was both a Division III state and state meet record at the time. She was also part of the 4x100 team that finished fifth.

Continuing her brilliance as a senior, Maslowski made it a three-peat in the high hurdles in 2011, breaking her own state-meet record with a 14.39. She anchored the 4x2 to another title in 1:42.64 and repeated in the lows with a 44.79. She completed her brilliant career with a state runner-up finish in the long jump in what was really the only season she focused on the event.

With Maslowski's 28 individual points, the 10 from the 4x2 and the 4x1 team's ability to register a sixth-place finish, the Crusaders won the team title with 41 points.

Maslowski was named the Eastern District's Division III Female Track Athlete of the Year four times.

A standout in the classroom as well, Maslowski signed to continue her career at Duke University where she eventually shifted to a multi-event performer. She qualified to the NCAA Division I Outdoor Nationals in 2015, earning honorable mention All-America in the heptathlon. In 2015, she took part in the NCAA Indoor National Meet and earned second team All-America in the long jump. She also ran on a 4x4 at the national level in 2014. She was All-ACC three times during the indoor season and twice during outdoor.

When she departed Durham, Maslowski owned seven Duke University records and the indoor long jump mark of 20-9 1/4 still stands.

Maslowski competed professionally for a few years after college and worked for the prestigious Santa Barbara Track Club as an instructor and youth track and field coach.

Robert 'Bob' Dawson (Coach)



Robert 'Bob' Dawson (East Liverpool High School, Class of 1958). Dawson enjoyed tremendous coaching success at Wellsville and East Liverpool during a 40-year career as a teacher/coach/administrator, finishing with an overall record of 264-98.

His Wellsville teams compiled a 237-60 mark; posted four undefeated seasons; were ranked in the AP poll eight times and won three state poll championships. Under his tutelage, Wellsville won three OVAC championships (1975, '76 and '77), 10 sectional titles, three district crowns and one regional championship, appearing in the OHSAA "Final Four" in 1976 where they lost to eventual state champion Dayton Roth in the state semifinals to finish with a sparkling 22-1 record.

After retiring at Wellsville, became head coach at East Liverpool. Taking over a team which had a 1-20 record, by the end of his third and final year, the Potters won 16 games; was state-ranked and won their first sectional title in 18 seasons.

He was a three-time Ohio Coach of the Year (1972, '74 and '76); was a finalist for the OVAC Coach of the Year Award in 1975; received a total of 28 Coach of the Year awards; and was a three-time honoree by the Dapper Dan Club of the Upper Ohio Valley.

He served as head coach of the U.S. All-Stars for Sonny Vaccaro's 1976 Roundball Classic in Pittsburgh (now known as the McDonald's All-American Game); coached in the OHSBCA North-South All-Star Basketball Classic.

Dawson was a tri-founder of the OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic along with Earl Haberfield and Henry "Hank" Lazasz and the OVAC Basketball Referee Award is named in his honor.

As an athlete, Dawson was a two-time all-Ohioan at East Liverpool and a three-year starter at Bowling Green State University averaging 6.8 points per game for his career. He was team captain as a senior in 1962 when BGSU was ranked No. 8 in the country; won the MAC championship and played in the NCAA Tournament.

He was previously inducted into the East Liverpool Athletic Hall of Fame (1997), the Wellsville Athletic Hall of Fame (charter class), the District 5 Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame (2002) and the Columbiana County Coaches Association Hall of Fame (2023).

Class of 2023

OVAC Hall of Fame

Sponsored by Robinson Auto Group

Kelly Rine (OVAC 'Family')



Kelly Rine (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1979). Rine has served the conference in countless roles, always working for the betterment of the student-athletes of the Ohio Valley.

After graduating from West Liberty State College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Physical Education/Driver Education, his teaching career started at St. Clairsville High School where he also coached football under the late George Strager. After three years at St. C. (1985-87), he went onto Ohio University and received his Master of Science degree in Physical Education/Athletic Administration while also serving as a graduate assistant football coach for two seasons.

For the next 11 years (1990-2001), Rine was employed at Alexander Local Schools in Albany as teacher, coach, Dean of Students and Athletic Director. At Alexander, he co-founded and was chairman of the annual HOOPS Invitational, a one day high school basketball extravaganza held at the Ohio University Convocation Center.

In 2001, he accepted the Athletic Director position at Meadowbrook High School where he remained until 2006. He served a two-year stint as the President of the EOIAAA while at Meadowbrook.

In the fall of 2006, Rine became the Athletic Director at St. Clairsville, retiring from that position at the end of the 2018-19 school year. While he was at St. C., the annual OVAC Cal Giffin Track Championships were moved to Red Devil Stadium, with Rine serving as the Site Manager.

He served as President of SEOIAAA, representative to the OIAAA Board of Control and co-chaired the OIAAA State Conference in 1998 for the Southeast District. He was a committee member for the 2003 and 2009 State Conferences hosted by the East District. He attained his CAA designation in 1997.

He was the Southeast District Athletic Administrator of the Year in 1999 and received the same honor in 2012 from the East District. In the spring of 2003, he received the NIAAA Distinguished Service Award presented by the EOIAAA, and the National Federation Citation award ***in*** 2004. He was inducted into the OIAAA Hall of Fame in 2015 and was awarded the OVAC Cal Giffin Track & Field Service Award in 2019.

Rine has served on the OVAC Executive Board as the Class 4A representative since 2004; began serving as the OVAC Class 1/A-2A Golf Director in 2021 and is a member of OVAC Hall of Fame Committee. He also was the Founder/Director of the George Strager Memorial Camp for 25 years (1990-2014) and is also a member of the Wheeling Hall of Fame Committee.

He is also a football official and softball umpire, and has worked the OVAC all-star games in both sports.

Robert 'Bob' Robinson (OVAC 'Contributor')



Robert 'Bob' Ribonson (Harrisville (WV) High School, Class of 1963). Robinson has been "the man" when it comes to supporting the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Hall of Fame since its inception in 2004, serving as the presenting sponsor of the event.

His yearly contributions – which to date total in excess of $70,000 – are the primary source of funds that enable the conference to honor and showcase the individuals who make up its rich history.

The owner of Robinson Auto Group located at The Highlands (he purchased his first auto dealership in New Martinsville, WV in 1974), he also served the OVAC in a coaching role, first as head girls' basketball coach at Mount de Chantal Visitation Academy and then for 20 year as an assistant to Penn Kurtz at Wheeling Central.

Robinson, a supporter of several individual schools within the conference as well, has had a heavy involvement with the YMCA of Wheeling, receiving the "Light of the Valley" award in 2009.

A graduate of West Virginia University, he is a lifetime member of the WVU Alumni Association and is a member of the Mountaineer Athletic Club. He was a 2013 inductee into the West Virginia University John Chambers College of Business and Economics Hall of Fame. Robinson also received the OVAC Denny Magruder Distinguished Service Award in 2011, the second such honoree following the award's namesake.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Penn Kurtz (Coaches)



Penn Kurtz (Medina High School, Class of 1973). He ranks near the top of all-time successful girls' basketball coaches in OVAC history, serving 28 years as head coach at Wheeling Central after a seven-year stint as an assistant. He retired from coaching following the 2019-20 season with an impressive career record of 517-257 record.

The Maroon Knights qualified for an OVAC-record 25 West Virginia State Tournaments by winning sectional and regional titles. WCC participated in 10 state championship games under Kurtz, winning three Class A crowns (2004, 2008 and 2018) while finishing as the runner-up seven times (1994, 1996, 1998, 2003, 2005, 2012 and 2015).

Kurtz-coached team won eight OVAC championships (1994, 1998, 2005, 2012, 2015, 2017, 2018 and 2020), second most in OVAC history behind fellow Hall of Famer Robert "Bubba" Kapral of St. John Central; and won more than 500 games, second most in conference history to another Hall of Famer, Stan Blankenship of John Marshall.

Kurtz, a graduate of Ohio University, was a finalist for the OVAC Coach of the Year Award in 2008 and 2018.

Dick Reasbeck (Athlete - 1950s)



Dick Reasbeck (St. John Central, Class of 1959). He was a sharp-shooting Irish guard who earned first team, five-player All-Ohio largest Class AA as a senior. Also a first team All-OVAC Class AA and All-Eastern District selection who scored 501 points for a 27.1 per game average, he played in the annual Ohio North-South All-Star Game.

As a junior, he sported a 18.9 point norm and earned first team All-Eastern District and honorable mention All-Ohio.

He also was a three-year regular in baseball and played football two seasons.

The basketball sharp-shooter earned a scholarship to Ohio State where he was a three-year letterman on nationally-ranked teams after competing on the freshman team while the varsity squad - led by Jerry Lucas and John Havlicek - won the NCAA crown.

In his sophomore year, the Buckeyes went unbeaten in regular season (27-1 overall) and finished as NCAA runner-up to Cincinnati. He averaged 3.1 points.

As a junior, the Buckeyes (26-2) again finished as NCAA runner-up to Cincinnati, with Reasbeck averaging 8.2 points in a sixth man role.

He was a senior regular as the Buckeyes finished with a 20-4 record. Reasbeck averaged 15.1 points a game and was accorded second team All-Big Ten Conference. He scored a high 32 points vs. Purdue.

After college, Reasbeck signed in 1963 with the baseball Los Angeles Angels and pitched two seasons for the Class AA minor league San Jose team.

Ted Tomasovich (Athlete - 1960s)



Ted Tomasovich (Weir High School, Class of 1964). He was a three-sport, three-year regular in football, basketball and baseball on top-record teams who became a Hall of Famer and two-sport, three-year regular at Georgia Tech and later a two-year professional baseball player.

In football, Tomasovich quarterbacked three Red Rider teams including a 10-1 record state Class AAA championship team as a sophomore and an 8-2 record team as a senior. Career-wise, he passed for 1,407 yards and 17 TDs for a run-oriented offense.

In basketball, the 6-foot-3 forward started on three Red Rider teams which became the only OVAC largest class school to advance to three straight state title games. He earned all-state tournament twice as a junior and senior as well as All-OVAC and All-State mention. Playing with charter OVAC Hall of Famer Ron (Fritz) Williams, the Red Riders ended 25-1 in 1962 with an OVAC Class AAA title and overall No. 1 state regular season poll ranking before ending state runner-up. A year later, Weir won the state Class AAA crown with a 19-5 record as Tomasovich earned All-OVAC and third team all-class "Big" All-State honors. As a senior, the Red Riders ended runner-up in the state 3-A tournament and he earned All-OVAC and honorable mention, all-class "Big" All-State. Tomasovich averaged double figures in points and rebounds for his career while Weir had a 62-8 record.

In baseball, the pitcher-outfielder was an all-class All-State honorable mention choice as a senior.

The Weir High Wall of Famer received an athletic scholarship to Georgia Tech and became a two-sport, three-year regular in basketball and baseball. He played 76 basketball games with a career point average of 12.7 including 15 points per game as a senior. He was a pitcher, first baseman and outfielder in baseball and earned NCAA All-District as a senior when he batted .381 with five home runs and 38 RBI --all team bests. Career-wise, he started 48 games with a .366 batting average and 5-4 record on the mound. He set a Tech career pitching record by allowing the fewest hits (54) with over 100 innings pitched. He was elected to the Georgia Tech Sports Hall of Fame in 1986.

Tomasovich was drafted twice by major league baseball. The San Diego Padres picked him in 1968 before the Cincinnati Reds selected him in 1969. He signed with the Reds and played two minor league seasons. He passed away in 2020 in Southern California.

Don Cash (Officials)



Don Cash (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1975). He wore the whistle and zebra stripes for more than four decades and was one of the most respected basketball officials in the Ohio Valley during that time.

A member of the Ohio Valley Board of Approved Basketball Officials for a whopping 41 years – working games in both Ohio and West Virginia – Cash officiated a total of 27 WVSSAC State Tournaments and one OHSAA State Tournament during his career and is one of seven OVAC officials who worked state title games in both states. In addition, Cash drew 32 regional assignments along with countless sectional and district tournament games.

He officiated 15 OVAC Championship games and worked the Cancer Research Classic – a premier high school basketball showcase – a total of 13 times.

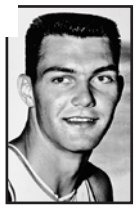
Cash is a 28-year member of the Ohio Valley Board's Executive Committee; spent 12 years as a training class instructor for the board and nine years as a rules interpreter. He's also the creator/administrator for the board's website.

The Co-Director with Sue Lewton of the OVAC Phil Lewton Sportsmanship Award, he was named the District 5 Basketball Coaches Association Official of the Year in 2003 and WVSSAC Boys Official of the Year in 2020.

In addition to his officiating, Cash is also a 25-year member of the Bridgeport Exempted Village School District's Board of Education including serving six times as president. He was the 2014 OSBA Outstanding Board Member for the Southeast Region.

He's the Executive Director of the Bridgeport Educational Assistance Foundation which has provided Bridgeport students more than $800,000 in scholarships as well as various forms of financial assistance to the district. He also served as Co-Director of the Bridgeport Alumni Phil Niekro Golf Classic for 24 years and is a 20-year member of the Bridgeport Alumni Board of Trustees.

Mike Tomasovich (Athlete - 1950s)



Mike Tomasorich (Weir High, Class of 1959). He was a highly-honored, 6-foot-4, 205-pound nine-letter athlete who earned five all-state honors while helping the Red Riders win state titles in football and baseball and also earning all-state tournament in basketball.

In football, he was a junior starter at quarterback on an 11-0 record team that won the OVAC largest Class AAA title and the W.Va. Class AAA crown with a 19-12 finals win over Fairmont Senior at Wheeling Island Stadium. As a senior, he started at end and defensive back on a 9-1 record team which repeated as OVAC champ and had a 21-game winning streak ended in the regular season finale by eventual state titlist Parkersburg. He earned first team All-State and All-OVAC at end.

In basketball, the senior led the Red Riders to sectional and regional titles to qualify for the state event where he earned all-tourney honors. He also was a first team All-OVAC Class AAA pick and selected all-class "Big" All-State third team. As a junior, he helped Weir to a 21-4 record and sectional crown.

In baseball, he was a three-time one-class, all-state honoree at pitcher. As a senior, Weir won the state title with a 16-2 record and a 6-2 state tournament title win over state power East Bank. He batted .400 with a 7-1 mound record. As a junior, he earned second team all-state as a pitcher. As a sophomore, he was first team all-state with a 6-1 record while batting .350 with three homers. His only mound loss was a 2-1, 8-inning state tourney loss to Martinsburg as he struck out 13 batters.

Al Salvadori (Athlete - 1960s)



Al Salvadori (Wheeling Central High School, Class of 1963). The 6-foot-8 basketball pivot ranks among the best 'big men' in OVAC history and was the most honored player and top scorer/rebounder for the unbeaten (23-0) 1963 Maroon Knight team regarded as the best in school history.

As a senior, he earned 1st Team all-class "Big" All-State, 1st Team Catholic All-State, 1st Team All-OVAC Class AAA, All-City and All-Catholic Class AA Tournament while averaging 18.6 points and double digit rebounds. He also was accorded Catholic schools All-America honors while Central was ranked one of the Top 10 Catholic teams nationally.

He led the Knights to back-to-back W.Va. Catholic Tournament championships, an OVAC largest Class AAA title as a senior and the overall No. 1 state regular season poll ranking by United Press International, the only state non-SSAC member to be ranked No. 1. The No. 2 ranked team was a Ron Williams-led Weir team which won the SSAC Class AAA title after two regular season losses to Central.

As a junior, Salvadori led the Knights to the state Catholic Tournament Class AA title while earning all-tourney, 2nd Team All-City and honorable mention all-class "Big" All-State.

A college D-I recruit, he accepted a grant to the University of South Carolina where he played on the freshman team before lettering and starting, three seasons on the varsity. He was selected All-Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament as a senior. He scored 773 points in 69 games and led the Gamecocks in rebounding.

Salvadori was drafted by two professional leagues, including the Baltimore franchise in the NBA, but opted to play two seasons with Oakland of the American Basketball League.

He was previously inducted into the Wheeling Central Hall of Fame.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Steve Doe (Athlete - 1970s)



Steve Doe (Warwood High School, Class of 1976). Doe was a three-sport star as well as a standout in the classroom during his Viking prep career. The 6-3, 215-pounder excelled in football, wrestling and track.

On the gridiron, Doe was a two-way starting tackle for three seasons. As a senior, he was accorded All-City, All-Valley, All-OVAC and All-State first-team laurels.

He participated in the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game. Doe was also awarded the prestigious "Chuck Howley Award" as Warwood High's top student-athlete.

His gridiron exploits earned him a scholarship to Ohio University. In Athens, Doe earned three letters and started two seasons at middle guard. He also earned a bachelor's degree with honors in industrial technology.

In wrestling at Warwood, Doe competed for three years in the unlimited heavyweight classification for Coach Eric Carder.

He placed fifth in the OVAC Tournament as a senior, helping the Vikings capture the overall all-class conference championship. He went on to pocket the West Virginia state championship.

Doe was also a gifted weight man for the Vikings' track team. He enjoyed a sparkling senior campaign, establishing a West Virginia prep record in the discus en route to winning the state meet championship. He also placed fifth in the state meet shot put event and his efforts helped propel the Vikings to the state team title.

Tim McCrate (Athlete - 1980s)



Tim McCrate (Barnesville High School, Class of 1989). Be it in high school or on the Division I collegiate level, McCrate was a champion.

For the Shamrocks, he was the OHSAA Class AA state champion in the 110-meter high hurdles in the sizzling time of 14.18 He was also the Bellaire Relays kingpin (besting Wheeling Park great Anthony Reed) and also the gold medalist in the OVAC championships.

As a junior, McCrate made his presence felt in the state meet. He was runner-up in the high hurdles and third in the 300 hurdles. As a sophomore, McCrate placed fourth in the state high hurdles.

His great prep success earned McCrate a scholarship to The Ohio State University, where he again tasted championship success.

As a Buckeye senior, McCrate captured the Big Ten 110-meter high hurdles outdoor crown. That coveted title came on the heels of a second-place finish in the Big Ten indoor championships.

His senior campaign was the icing on the cake of a sparkling Buckeye track career. McCrate placed in both Big Ten championship meets as a sophomore and junior.

McCrate was no one-sport wonder. He also excelled on the gridiron for the Shamrocks on both sides of the ball. He was a big-play wide receiver as well as defensive back, earning special mention All-Ohio honors as a senior as well as first-team All-Eastern District laurels. He was a special mention All-Valley Big School honoree as well as honorable mention All-OVAC.

McCrate- currently the athletic director at Dover High School - is also an enshrined in the Eastern District Cross Country & Track Hall of Fame.

Jessica Hines (Athlete - 1990s)



Jessica Hines (Barnesville High School, Class of 1998) -- This former Shamrock was a scorer. A prolific scorer, actually, during her prep days.

Hines torched opposing defenses for four years in Barnesville, accumulating a school-record 1,897 points. She averaged 27.9 points a game as a senior and during her junior season in which the Shamrocks advanced to the Division III regional tournament, Hines pumped in 27 points a night and finished with 661 points for the season, which is still the Barnesville record. She put forth a single-game high of 45 points against Buckeye Trail.

Hines did more than just score the ball, however. She also yanked down 502 career rebounds.

Hines' production wasn't hollow by any means. During her career, she and the Shamrocks posted a record of 61-28 and won the district championship in 1997.

Because of her lofty numbers and success, Hines earned a myriad of post-season accolades during her career. She was named First Team All-Ohio as a junior and senior and was a finalist for Ohio's Ms. Basketball award.

On top of the state level accolades, she earned All-Eastern District, All-OVAC, All-District 12 and captained the All-Valley team multiple times. She was also the District 12 Player of the Year. She took part in the Ohio North-South All-Star Game as well as the OVAC All-Star Game.

Hines wasn't limited to the basketball court. She was a four-year letter winner on both the cross country and softball teams and as a senior the Shamrocks won the Division III state cross country title.

Hines attended Coffeyville Community College in Kansas after her high-school career concluded. She started for two seasons there before returning to the Ohio Valley to play for Ohio University Eastern where she averaged 22.5 points and 4.8 assists a game. She helped guide the Panthers to a conference championship when she scored 32 points in the title game.

This marks the second hall of fame for which Hines has been selected. She was inducted to the District 12 Hall of Fame in 2015.

Lance LaFollette (Athlete - 1970s)



Lance LaFollette (Woodsfield High School, Class of 1979). LaFollette ended his Redskin football career for legendary coach Jay Circosta as one of the premier wide receivers in OVAC history.

When he completed his Woodsfield grid career, the prolific wideout established Ohio Valley records for receiving yards in a season (886 yards) and touchdown catches in a season (13). He still remains as the Woodsfield/Monroe Central leader in receiving yards.

LaFollette was a first-team All-Ohio honoree as a senior to go along with first-team All-OVAC, All-PVC and All-Eastern District laurels. He was also tabbed PVC Lineman of the Year. The glue-fingered receiver was also first-team All-OVAC and All-Eastern District as a junior.

After picking up his Woodsfield High diploma, LaFollette took his grid skills to West Liberty, where he again sparkled as a receiver.

Playing under two different head coaches (John Westenhaver and Larry Shank), he landed many passes and many honors.

LaFollette established Hilltopper records for receptions in a game (12) and in a season (58). Both marks have since been broken. He was a three-time All-WVC honoree and, in 1981, he was tabbed as West Liberty's MVP. That same season, he was accorded NAIA All-American honors.

The former Redskins standout was honored twice (1979 & 1984) by the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club.

In addition to his outstanding football career at Woodsfield, LaFollette enjoyed success in hoops and on the diamond.

He was a two-year starter in basketball and a double-digit scorer, earning All-PVC honors.

In baseball for the Redskins, LaFollette was four-year starter as a middle infielder, initially as a second baseman then moving to shortstop for Circosta. He batted over .400 as the team's leadoff hitter as a senior.

LaFollette's senior year was steeped in championships as Woodsfield captured PVC crowns in football, basketball and baseball that year, a feat that no other school had ever accomplished.

Shawn Straughn (Athlete - 1980s)



Shawn Straughn (Bishop Donahue High School, Class of 1986). Straughn became a fixture in the Bishops' starting lineups in both football and basketball as a sophomore. He blossomed into a star in both sports during the ensuing three years.

On the gridiron, Straughn was a three-year regular at safety and a two-year starter at quarterback. He intercepted six passes from his secondary post as a junior and five more as a senior, a season in which he made 35 solo tackles and assisted on 28 others.

Straughn was accorded first-team All-State and All-Valley honors at safety as a senior. He was a two-time first team All-OVAC selection on the gridiron. That same season, Straughn also enjoyed a prolific campaign as the Bishops' quarterback. He passed for more than 1,000 yards while also rushing for seven touchdowns. He was also a superb punter.

Straughn was even more of a force in basketball, earning a starting spot at center as a sophomore. The athletic post averaged 18.5 points and 11.7 rebounds for his career, and the Bishops posted an impressive 56-15 record during those three years.

As a junior, Straughn helped carry Donahue to a banner 23-3 mark en route to capturing the West Virginia Class A championship. He was named to the All-Tournament Team. During that season, Straughn averaged 20 points and 11.3 rebounds a game and he was rewarded by being tabbed first-team All-Valley and second-team All-State.

As a senior, Straughn averaged 23.3 points and 14.1 rebounds a contest. Those numbers gained him first-team All-State honors while being named captain of the All-Valley Small School squad. The multi-talented Bishop was also nominated for the prestigious McDonald's All-American Team.

The two-time All-OVAC selection finished his prep career with 1,246 points.

Fred Ray (Athlete - 1990s)



Fred Ray (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1999) -- Whether it was on the football field or the track, this Purple Rider put forth a prep career to remember.

In football, Ray was a two-year starter at quarterback and guided the Purple Riders to one of their finest seasons in 1998, which culminated with a 10-0 regular season, a No. 2 ranking in the Division IV Associated Press Poll and the school's first trip to the OHSAA playoffs.

Ray was an effective runner and passer and his prowess earned him First Team All-Ohio, All-Eastern District, All-OVAC and All-Valley. He was also the starting quarterback in 1997 and helped guide the Riders to an 8-2 record.

On the track, Ray excelled in the jumping events as well as in the sprints. He was an OVAC champion in the long jump with a mark of 21-5 and as a junior he ran a key leg on the Purple Riders' 4x100-meter relay team that finished as All-Ohio by placing sixth in the Division II state meet with a sizzling time of 43.87. As a senior, he was a part of the 400-meter relay team that set the MFHS school record at 43.20. Ray was also a standout in the high jump.

As a basketball player, Ray averaged 10 points and nine rebounds per game.

After his prep career, Ray went to Ohio University to play football where he was a four-year player for the Bobcats. He finished his career with 1,607 yards and 10 touchdown passing as well as 949 yards and 18 touchdowns rushing.

Ray played professionally for the Ohio Valley Greyhounds of the Indoor Football League and then played for the Huntington Hammers of the Ultimate Indoor Football League, but eventually traded his uniform for a headset and became the team's offensive coordinator.

Following that stint, he began a high school coaching career which has made stops at Fairview High School in Kentucky, Bidwell River Valley in southern Ohio and he's spent the last several seasons as the head coach at Bridgeport.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Jennie Castle (Athlete - 2000s)



Jennie Castle (Barnesville High School, Class of 2001) — This former Shamrock is one of the most decorated middle-distance runners the Ohio Valley has ever produced.

Castle got it done, on the track, primarily in the 800-meter run where she won the 2001 state championship in what was then a state-record time of 2:12.05.

Prior to arriving at the state meet, as a senior, Castle had put together a resume that was basically second to none. She won four consecutive regional championships in the 800 and had placed three times in the state meet at the distance. She was fifth as a freshman and sophomore before winning the bronze as a junior.

In total, Castle was a six-time All-Ohioan on the track. She was also part of two 4x800 teams that scored in the state.

She won 10 Eastern District titles and a like number of OVAC championships. At the conference meet, to help the team to score more points, Castle was also asked to demonstrate her versatility. That's proven by the fact that when she graduated she held a conference record in six events.

While Castle excelled in the middle distance on the track, she also certainly had the ability to run long distance as she demonstrated during the fall for the Shamrocks' cross country team.

Castle was an All-Ohioan as a freshman in cross country, placing eighth. She was the first Shamrock finisher at the 1997 Division III state meet and led them to the team championship. She was the district champion in cross country as a sophomore and a four-time All-OVAC performer.

Along with the state championship, the Shamrocks won four consecutive OVAC team titles during her cross country career.

Castle continued her track career at the University of Akron where she ran personal-best times of 2:06.91 and 4:23.26 in the 800 and 1500, respectively. She was a Mid-American Conference Outdoor champion in 2005 in the 1500 and qualified for the NCAA National Meet. She placed in the MAC meet — either indoor or outdoor — six times and was second-team All-MAC four other times. She also earned Academic All-MAC and All-American accolades. Castle ran professionally for the Atlanta Track Club.

Justin Fox (Athlete - 2010s)



Justin Fox (Magnolia High School, Class of 2011) — It didn't matter if it was on the football or baseball field, this former Blue Eagle just got it done with regularity.

Fox is the winningest quarterback in West Virginia and Ohio Valley history and earned upwards of 18 post-season accolades in football and baseball combined.

In football, Fox played a myriad of positions, but it was at quarterback where he made his presence felt the most. During his senior season, he led the Blue Eagles to their first state championship since 1964 with a perfect 14-0 record and captured the Kennedy Award as the state of West Virginia's premier prep player.

As a senior, Fox completed 149 of 231 passes for 2,474 yards and 29 touchdowns. He ran for nine additional touchdowns and kicked an astounding 71 PATs. He broke the school record for career passing yards.

He earned First Team All-State in each of his final three years of high school at three different positions. He was honored as a quarterback as a senior, defensive back as a junior and punter as a sophomore. He was thrice named to the All-OVAC squad as well as All-Valley Big School and was named the Ohio Valley HS Football Player of the Year by WTOV-9.

On the baseball field, Fox earned All-State First Team twice, including the captain of the Class AA team as a pitcher. He was also listed as a pitcher after his junior season and as a utility player following his sophomore campaign. He was named All-OVAC three times as well as All-Valley. He guided the Blue Eagles to the OVAC Class 3A title in 2009.

It was baseball that Fox pursued at the collegiate level. He opted to continue his career at West Virginia University where he started 92 games in his Mountaineer career and appeared in 131. He ranked third on the team, as a senior, with a .273 batting average. He earned four letters during his time in Morgantown.

Fox had a brief professional career, playing two years in the Frontier League with Washington, Pa. and Rockford, Ill.

Joel Davia (Athlete - 2000s)



Koel Davia (Union Local High School, Class of 2004) — This former Jet etched his name into Ohio wrestling history by pulling off one of the rarest feats possible.

Davia had his hand raised after a state championship match three times, which has only been done by 68 other grapplers in Buckeye State history.

During the 2002 season, Davia, who hadn't qualified for the state meet as a freshman, reached the championship match and earned his first gold in 59 seconds with a first-period pin.

Davia claimed the OVAC title in 2003 before embarking on his post-season journey, which saw him arrive back in Columbus with a chance to defend his title. He did so with a 4-1 victory over Harrison Central's Tony Carrothers.

As a senior, Davia was denied in the OVAC title match by OVAC Hall of Famer and eventual Division II state champion Adam Hoppel in one of the best matches contested in conference tournament history.

However, Davia, competing in Division III in the postseason, didn't dwell on that match. He capped his brilliant career with a 4-2 victory in the state final and put the finishing touches on a 49-2 season.

Davia finished his prep career with an impressive 167-27 career record, which at the time of his graduation was the eighth most in Ohio history. Of his total victories, an astounding 101 came via the pin, which at the time was the eighth most in Ohio history. Davia was named the 2004 Eastern District and Ohio OVAC Wrestler of the Year.

After being ranked the 99th-best recruit in America, Davia continued his wrestling career at Division I Edinboro University. He competed there for two seasons.

Along with his work on the wrestling mat, Davia was a multi-year letterman in football as a lineman.

He was also a standout in the throwing circles for the Jets' track team. He had owned the school discus record until it was broken in 2022.

Max Nogay (Athlete - 2010s)



Max Nogay (Madonna High School, Class of 2010) — It didn't matter what or where this former Blue Don standout played, he did a lot of winning.

Nogay is one of the rare athletes who won multiple team and individual state championships during his prep career as he earned multiple letters and accolades in football, wrestling and baseball.

In football, Nogay played quarterback for the Blue Dons and led the team to a 21-0 record in that stretch, including a perfect 14-0 season in 2009 which was capped with a Class A state championship. He passed and ran for more than 1,000 yards in that season.

For his efforts, Nogay was named First Team All-State as a defensive back and was named captain of the unit. He was second-team All-State as a junior and honorable mention following his sophomore season. He was also named All-OVAC and All-Valley twice. After his senior season, he was named a prep All-American by MaxPreps.

That football season set the tone for the wrestling season where Nogay became Madonna's first OVAC Champion at 171 pounds that season. He followed that up by claiming his second state championship. He won the 160-pound title as a junior. He was a four-time state placer and was also named the OVAC/West Virginia Wrestler of the Year.

A pitcher and shortstop, Nogay was just as impressive on the baseball diamond. He led the Blue Dons to their first state title in 2010, which followed up their first appearance in the state tournament a season prior. Three times, Nogay was named First Team All-State as an infielder and twice was a captain. He was named All-OVAC three times and twice All-Valley.

Despite his football and wrestling prowess, it was baseball and the chance to play at West Virginia that won out for Nogay. He matriculated to Morgantown and lettered three times as a catcher and designated hitter. He started 52 games and hit five career home runs, including a grand slam. He also posted a .991 fielding percentage in 2012, committing nary an error in 156 chances. He earned both All-Big East and All-Big 12 accolades for his work in the classroom.

He is currently an assistant United States Attorney for the Northern District of West Virginia and is Environmental Justice Coordinator in Wheeling.

Hall of Fame

Hall of Fame

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Class of 2024

OVAC Hall of Fame

Terry Rataiczak (OVAC 'Contributor')



Terry Rataiczak (Bellaire High School, Class of 1991). The Ohio Valley Athletic Conference joined the "technology age" primarily due to the expertise of Rataiczak.

The CEO of Kinetic Networking in Caldwell, he was responsible for building the OVAC website (ovac.org), which has become the lifeblood of conference communications, in 1999 His efforts included design, start-up, creating voting formats and the ability to have online voting for all-conference and all-star teams by the coaches, and methods for text messaging and score reporting. It greatly reduced the need for traditional mail correspondence and some of the in-person meetings throughout the year.

Rataiczak's other contributions included implementing an electric timing system for the OVAC Cal Pokas Cross Country Championships in 2015 and assisting with the OVAC Cal Giffin Track Championships. He also handled the OVAC George Strager "Evening with the Stars" banquet held in conjunction with the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football game for three or four years.

He also contributed by keeping statistics at both Bellaire and Caldwell and he served on the Caldwell Exempted Village Board of Education

Rataiczak has also been involved in providing numerous scholarship opportunities for athletes within the conference. He has sponsored the OVAC Soccer Scholarship since 2010, awarding $12,500 to 25 recipients (as of 2023) and the OVAC Cross Country Scholarship since 2015, awarding $6,000 to 12 recipients (as of 2023), with both presented at the annual OVAC Banquet of Champions at WesBanco Arena in May. He also helped start a scholarship fund in memory of long-time Journal-Leader photographer Charles "Wally" McAuley, presented annually in Noble County to students from Caldwell and Shenandoah high schools.

The son of long-time OVAC Executive Secretary/Director and fellow OVAC Hall of Famer Thomas E. Rataiczak, he is also actively involved with Rotary (Marietta chapter) since 2009, serving as Foundation Chair, Treasurer, President and Chairman of the Foundation Committee, recently elected to be District Governor 6690 for 2026-27. He's been a member of Eagles 2952 in Caldwell for seven years, serving as treasurer for the last six for a chapter that returns around $75.000 to area communities annually.

John Magistro (Coach)



John Magistro (St. John Central High School, Class of 1966). Magistro amassed an impressive 242-113 career coaching record including a 181-76 mark in 23 years at Bellaire, highlighted by back-to-back OHSAA Division IV State Championship Game appearances. In 1995, the Big Reds dropped a heartbreaking 50-44 double-overtime loss to Versailles in the title game before returning in 1996 only to fall to Germantown Valley View, 37-12, with Bellaire finishing 13-1 both seasons.

Magistro-coached Bellaire teams reached the OHSAA playoffs seven times (193, '95, '96, '97, 2003, '05, 06), winning six regional titles (1995, '96, '97, 2003, '05, '06); claimed nine OVAC championships (1988, '93, '94, '95, '96, '97, 2003, '05, 06); and had a 37-game regular season winning streak (1995-98).

He was the Ohio Division IV Coach of the Year three times (1995-96-97); East District Division IV Coach of the Year seven times; Ohio Valley Football Coach of the Year three times and the OVAC Overall Coach of the Year (all sports) in 1996. Magistro coached in the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game in 1995 and the OHSBCA North-South All-Star Football Game in 2006.

Magistro's coaching career began at St. John Central in 1970 as freshman coach and varsity assistant for three years. He moved on to Martins Ferry where he was an assistant in football (1973-78) and baseball (1975-76) before becoming the head baseball coach (1977-79).

He moved on to Bellaire as an assistant football coach (1980-83) and then began a highly successful run as the Big Reds' head coach (1984-2006).

After stepping down at Bellaire, he was an assistant coach at Olentangy (2007-08), head coach at Westerville Central (2009-2016) and assistant at Worthington Kilbourne (2017-2022). He also had a two-year stint as offensive coordinator of the Ohio Valley Greyhounds of the National Indoor Football League.

At Westerville Central, his nine-year record was 61-37 and his teams made the OHSAA playoffs four times while winning the Ohio Capital Conference Cardinal Division in 2011 and 2013. He was Ohio Division I Coach of the Year in 2011.

Magistro was previously inducted into the West Liberty University Hall of Fame (2001), the Minor Pro Football Hall of Fame in Pittsburgh (2015) the Ohio High School Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame (2015); and the Ohio Valley Football Coaches Hall of Fame (2024).

Libby Shepherd (OVAC 'Family')



Libby Shepherd (Wheeling High School, Class of 1971). If it involves cheering, it's a good bet Shepherd is involved.

She started out as a cheerleader at Wheeling High, later serving as cheer coach at Wheeling Park High School and Bridge Street Middle School. Shepherd also worked countless competitions throughout the Ohio Valley and beyond including Pac-8 competition and the West Virginia Regional.

Her biggest impact, however, has been with the conference as she has served as the OVAC Cheering Championships Director since 1996, That yearly event at WesBanco Arena features as many as 25-30 schools, more than 300 cheerleaders and thousands of spectators and has contributed between $15,000 and $20,000 to the OVAC's general fund annually, totaling more than $325,000 thus far.

She also added the role of OVAC Junior High Cheer Director starting in 2007, an event that helps fund the annual OVAC Banquet of Champions.

Shepherd's responsibilities include heading up the annual committee meeting; designing and producing the program; selecting the cheerleaders for the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game and selecting the cheer scholarship winners annually.

Beyond cheering, Shepherd has had other roles within the conference. She has assisted in various capacities with the OVAC Cal Giffin Track Championships during their time in Shadyside and serves as a member of the OVAC Scholarship Committee.

An educator at Bridge Street, Ritchie and Wheeling middle schools for more than 40 years, she was the recipient of the first OVAC Overtime Achievement Award in 2019.

Kim North (Media)



Kin North (Troy High School, Class of 1977). A media member in the Ohio Valley since 1983, he has worked at the Weirton Daily News, Steubenville Herald Star, Wheeling News Register/Intelligencer and Times Leader.

North, who has a Bachelor of Science Degree from Salem College, has covered a wide variety of sporting events throughout the conference as both a writer and photographer, everything from youth level to college.

Probably his biggest passion, however, is with the sport of wrestling. He has covered every conceivable event from countless duals and invitationals to four decades of OVAC Ron Mauck Wrestling Tournaments as well as OHSAA and WVSSAC state tournaments.

In 1985, he pulled off a "triple" by covering the OVAC Tournament, the West Virginia State Tournament and the NAIA National Tournament – all at WesBanco Arena in Wheeling.

North was selected as the West Virginia Wrestling Sportswriter of the Year in 1990 and 2017; the National Wrestling Sportswriter of the Year by Wrestling USA Magazine; and received the National Wrestling Hall of Fame's West Virginia Chapter 'Lifetime Service to Wrestling' award in 2018.

Lou Nocida (Coach)



Lou Nocida (Glenville High School, Class of 1959). With stops at five different high schools and one college on his resume, Nocida's record as a prep football coach over 23 seasons was an impressive 180-76 with five state championships at Sistersville High to his credit.

Nocida began his coaching career with one year at Fort Frye (8-2 in 1967) before moving on to Magnolia for six seasons (1969-74) with a 41-22 record and two playoff appearances, including a state runner-up finish in 1972. He was also head basketball coach for one year at Magnolia, leading the Blue Eagles to an 18-7 record and a W. Va. Class AA runner-up finish led by OVAC Hall of Famer John 'Fuzzy' Filliez.

After two years at Oak Glen (1975-76) with an 8-12 record, he began a remarkable 10-year run at Sistersville (1977-86) where he compiled a sparkling 104-18 record over 10 seasons.

Nocida took the Tigers from the brink of dropping football to a state small school powerhouse, winning five Class A state championships (1980, '81, '84, '85, '86) and two runner-up finishes ('82 & '83). Between 1980-86, Sistersville lost only five games and had a 42-game regular season winning streak, with the 1981 team finishing 13-0 (outscoring its opponents 531-26) and the 1986 squad going 12-0.

Nocida-coached teams won OVAC football titles in 1972 and '73 at Magnolia and 1986 at Sistersville. At Sistersville, he coached Hunt Award winner Brian Swisher and two Kennedy Award winners – Joel Wilson and Jeff Swisher.

He served as head coach at Glenville State College for three years (1987-89) with an 8-20-1 record and spent three years at Parkersburg South High (1990-92 and again in 2000) with a 19-22 record and one playoff appearance (1991).

Nocida was named OVAC Coach of the Year (all sports) in 1983 and was the West Virginia Coach of the Year (all sports) in 1981 and 1985.

As an athlete, Nocida was an honorable mention All-West Virginia Class A running back as a senior. He played at Glenville State College, graduating in 1965, and was a defensive back with the Wheeling Ironmen of the Continental Football League.

Hall of Fame

Hall of Fame

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Roger Levi (Official)



Roger Levi (Warren Consolidated High School, Class of 1964). Levi spent an incredible 50 years as a registered basketball official in both Ohio and West Virginia, with more than 2,200 games to his credit during 44 years of active service.

He was inducted into the Ohio High School Athletic Association's Officials Hall of Fame in 2008 and received the OVAC Robert Dawson Basketball Officials Award in 2019. He was named the District 12 Basketball Coaches Association Official of the Year in 1994 and the District 5 Official of the year in 1995 and 2008.

Levi worked a total of 19 state tournaments - 14 in Ohio (five boys and nine girls) and five in West Virginia (three boys and two girls) including state championship games in each. He also officiated at least 65 regional-level games and numerous OVAC Basketball Championship contests.

He served two terms as president of the Ohio Valley Board of Approved Basketball Officials and was also the secretary-treasurer of that association for many years.

A graduate of Ohio University and a teacher in the Buckeye Local School District for 31 years, he passed away in 2023 at the age of 75.

Keith Sommer (Athlete - 1950s)



Keith Sommer (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1959). Sommer earned 10 Purple Rider letters in three sports--four each in football and track and two in wrestling as the sport originated at the school during his junior year.

In football, the back was selected to the Class AAA All-OVAC team and All-Valley "Big School" mention as a senior while not playing on a winning team all four years. He was selected to play in the Ohio-W.Va. All-Star Game but opted instead to compete in the Ohio North-South All-Star Game in Canton.

In track, he qualified for the state meet as a freshman and sophomore member of the Riders' 440-yard relay unit.

Wrestling is where he earned his most recognition. Sommer became Ferry's first state place-winner on the mat with an Ohio runner-up finish in the 175-pound class to cap a 32-1 season record. Ferry's team captain also won OVAC and District titles as a senior. He also qualified for the state meet as a junior.

He enrolled at Bowling Green University where he was a freshman member of the 1959 football team which posted the school's first-ever perfect record team (9-0) and claimed the college division national title. The team was inducted into the school Athletic Hall of Fame in 2013.

He also competed in wrestling and was Mid-America Conference runner-up as a sophomore, when he only had two losses, but injuries kept him from competing in his final two seasons.

Sommer, a long-time attorney in his hometown, was inducted into both the Martins Ferry High Athletic Hall of Fame and the Martins Ferry Wrestling Hall of Fame.

Donnie Young (Athlete - 1960s)



Donnie Young (Wintersville High School, Class of 1968). Young was an Ohio Valley record-setting running back for three Golden Warrior teams which went 28-2 under Hall of Fame coach Bob Kettlewell, including a 10-0 record as a senior when he set a modern valley career rushing record of 4,230 yards which lasted for 18 years. As a junior, he led the valley and the state of Ohio with 202 points in 10 games for the OVAC Class AAA title-winning team while rushing for 1,819 yards on 218 carries. He led the valley in both scoring and rushing in his last two years.

As a senior, the 5-foot-9, 165-pound back rushed for 1,489 yards on 212 carries and scored 148 points. Career-wise, he scored 416 points including 350 in his last two seasons.

His senior honors included first team All-Ohio largest Class AA and national recognition from *Parade* magazine.

Young was twice honored as first team All-Valley "Big School", All-OVAC Class AAA, All-Eastern District, All-Eastern Ohio and captain, and was the Ohio-West Virginia All-Star Football Game MVP.

In addition to football, he lettered three years in basketball and two years in track.

He earned a football scholarship to Eastern Kentucky University and lettered three varsity seasons after playing on the freshman team.

After college, he coached high school football in Kentucky for 37 years and was the coach of future Pittsburgh Steeler lineman Dermontti Dawson and world sprint champion Tyson Gay. He passed away in 2021.

Darrell Cheripko (Athlete - 1970s)



Darrell Cheripko (Brooke High School, Class of 1979). Cheripko was a two-sport standout for the Bruins, earning Class AAA All-State, All-OVAC Class 4A and All-Valley honors in football and baseball.

The 6-4, 210-pounder started three years for Coach Bud Billiard's gridders at tight end and defensive end. He was a two-year captain for the OVAC Class 4A two-time champions. Cheripko played in the OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football Game and the W.Va. North-South All-Star Football Game. He also received special recognition from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dans.

In baseball, Cheripko was a three-year starter. He was the Bruins' regular first baseman as a sophomore and junior before becoming the catcher as a senior.

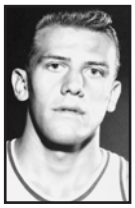
As a junior, he earned second-team All-Valley honors while being tabbed honorable mention All-State Class AAA. As a senior, he was tabbed first-team All-Valley as a catcher and a first-team All-State utility selection.

As a senior, Cheripko led the Ohio Valley with seven home runs, 13 doubles and 35 runs scored while batting a robust. 456. He was second in the Ohio Valley with 37 hits.

Cheripko was also a Bruins basketball performer, picking up two letters and leading the team in rebounds. He was inducted into the Brooke Athletic Hall of Fame in 2009.

After his Brooke High career came to an end, he matriculated to Youngstown State, earning two football letters.

Bob O'Brien (Athlete - 1950s)



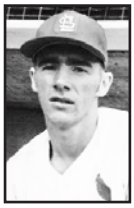
Bob O'Brien (Benwood Union High School, Class of 1953). O'Brien was a 6-foot-3 forward-center who led the most successful Union team to a 19-1 regular season record and state tourney berth while earning First Team All-State honors as a senior.

He was a three-year starter for the Ironmen, who won two straight OVAC Class A titles with overall 22-2 and 16-5 records. The two-time All-OVAC selection was selected captain as a senior while leading the OVAC in scoring with a 22-point average. As a senior, he led the Ironmen to sectional and regional titles in the largest Class AA and into the state tournament before bowing to Grafton. An All-State Tournament pick, he was first team "Big" All-State after earning all-class "Big" All-State mention as a junior. He also played in the W.Va. vs. Ohio All-Star Game at Madison Gym on Wheeling Island.

O'Brien earned a scholarship to the University of Maryland and led the freshman team in scoring with an 18-point mark before lettering three years on the varsity. He started all 74 varsity games and scored 972 points (13.1 ppg). He averaged double figures all three years and was team captain as a senior. He was selected Second Team All-Atlantic Coast Conference and Honorable Mention All-America.

After college, he played two seasons, and started most games, with the Bullets of the Eastern Professional League before the team went bankrupt and folded.

Thomas 'Chip' Coulter (Athlete - 1960s)



Thomas 'Chip' Coulter (Toronto High School, Class of 1964). Coulter was a three-sport, four-year athlete, and record-setting basketball player who played professional baseball including a brief stint in the major leagues.

The four-year Red Knight basketball regular set a school career scoring record of 1,580 points which lasted 50 years until broken in 2015 by Blaze Glenn. The 5-foot-10, 170-pound Coulter was a three-time All-Eastern Ohio selection and twice mentioned for All-Ohio in the largest Class AAA by The Associated Press –third team as a senior and honorable mention as a junior. He led the Knights to the OVAC Class AA crown as a senior and was named All-OVAC.

In baseball, the three-year starting infielder, and four-year letterman, earned some All-Ohio recognition as a senior. He also lettered in track four years.

After his senior season, he signed a professional baseball contract with the St. Louis Cardinals and played six years with the Tidewater Tides and Arkansas Travelors. In 1969, the second baseman was called up to the major leagues and played six games. He was traded to the New York Mets and played one minor league season before retiring and returning home to Toronto.

He was honored in the charter class (2000) of the Toronto High Athletic Hall of Fame.

Scott Barnhouse (Athlete - 1970s)



Scott Barnhouse (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 1978). Barnhouse was a three-sport standout for the Red Devils, but it was on the baseball diamond where he had the biggest clout.

He was a three-year letterman for baseball coaching legend Richard 'Lefty' Hall. The multi-talented athlete earned All-Ohio, All-OVAC and All-Valley honors as a senior.

As a junior, Barnhouse tossed a perfect game in an OHSAA Class AA Sectional contest. He was tabbed to participate in the Mizuno All-Star Game in Columbus.

Barnhouse turned in a sparkling senior season for the Red Devils, helping Hall's charges reach the OHSAA Class AA Regional tournament. He crafted a 6-2 mound mark with a miniscule 1.67 ERA while batting at a sparkling .372 clip.

The talented right-hander accepted a baseball scholarship to Mercer University in Georgia. He quickly worked his way into the starting rotation and helped the Bears capture three conference championships in four years.

Barnhouse compiled a 26-21 career mound mark for Mercer. He was also the Bears' starting first baseman as a senior, producing a .321 batting average with 12 home runs and 32 RBI.

Barnhouse was chosen by the Seattle Mariners in the 1982 Major League Baseball Draft. He eventually reached the Class AAA Minor League level with Salt Lake City in 1983. In 1985, he was traded to the San Diego Padres. His pro career ended two years later.

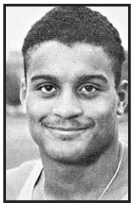
During his St. C. prep days, Barnhouse was an explosive quarterback. He executed Coach George Strager's famed "belly-series" to near perfection. He earned first team All-OVAC Class AAA honors and was chosen to play in the 1978 OVAC Rudy Mumley All-Star Football game. He was also an honorable mention All-OVAC selection in basketball as a junior.

Hall of Fame

OHIO VALLEY ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Aric Long (Athlete - 1980s)



Aric Long (East Liverpool High School, Class of 1988). Long scripted a sparkling athletic career at East Liverpool. However, after he picked up his Potter diploma his achievements soared to new heights.

Long represented the United States in the 1992 Olympic Games staged in Barcelona, Spain as a decathlete. Unfortunately, he had to drop out of the competition after seven events as he tore his Achilles tendon. Prior to being injured, he won the Olympic decathlon high jump competition via his 7-1.5 effort.

In 1995, Long represented the U.S .in the World Games. He finished fourth in the decathlon. In 1989, Long was the Pan-American Games Junior Champion in the decathlon.

During his prep days at East Liverpool, Long was a force both in the OVAC and at the OHSAA state meet. He was OVAC runner-up in the high jump as a sophomore, junior and senior, clearing 6-9 as a senior.

Long was Class AAA runner-up in the state meet as a senior via his 6-10 effort. He was fourth in the state championships as a junior, also clearing 6-10.

While the high jump was his obvious meal ticket, he also excelled in several events during his Potter days. He was a 21-8 long jumper, 14.8 high hurdler, 130-0 discus thrower and 48-10 shot putter while also helping the Potters' 4x100 relay quartet establish a school record (44.4).

His exploits earned him a track scholarship to the University of Tennessee. He enjoyed a stellar career with the Vols, including winning the NCAA decathlon championship in 1991 and taking the runner-up spot in 1992. He also claimed multiple Southeast Conference titles.

Long was a three-sport standout for East Liverpool, also competing in basketball and football. On the gridiron, the 6-2, 245-pound linebacker garnered first-team All-OVAC AAAA honors.

The OVAC shrine induction will be Long's third Hall of Fame. He previously has been enshrined in the East Liverpool Athletic HOF as well as the East District Track & Cross Country Association Hall of Fame.

Rafael Cruz (Athlete - 1990s)



Rafael Cruz (Wheeling ParkHigh School, Class of 1997). One of only three OVAC standouts in more than a half-century to win the Bill Evans Award as the West Virginia Boys' Basketball Player of the Year, Rafael Cruz scored over 1,300 points at Wheeling Park before taking his talents to the collegiate and professional levels.

Cruz burst onto the scene as a sophomore starter and All-Tournament selection as the Patriots capped their 1995 post-season run with an epic 99-96 triple-overtime win over Beckley Woodrow Wilson in the Class AAA state championship game. The 6-2 shooting guard made the All-State Tournament team again the following year, averaging 23.6 ppg. in leading WPHS to another regional title and state tournament berth, but the best was yet to come.

Switched from shooting guard to point guard, the blurry-fast southpaw stuffed the stat sheets as a senior to key yet another state tournament run for the Patriots. He averaged 15.3 points a night along with 6.2 assists and 3.7 steals while shooting nearly 50 percent from the floor and just under 80 percent from the foul line. Wheeling Park fell to Woodrow Wilson in the 1997 state title game but Cruz – who set a tournament record with 8 steals in the semifinals – swept nearly every post-season honor.

In addition to the Evans Award from the W.Va. Sports Writers Association, Cruz was honored as the West Virginia Gatorade Player of the Year and voted captain of the Class AAA All-State Team. The 2-time first-team All-Stater was also named co-captain of the All-Valley "Big School" and Class 4-A All-OVAC Teams.

A National Honor Society member with a 4.0 GPA, Cruz began his collegiate career with one season at the University of Massachusetts before playing his final three years at Youngstown State. He set a school record as a senior at YSU by making 41 straight free throws and still ranks among the Penguins' all-time leaders in free throw percentage (149-176, .847).

After graduating from Youngstown State, Cruz played professionally for more than two decades in his native Puerto Rico. He also served as an assistant coach for Puerto Rico in the 2024 Olympics.

Ashley Dunigan (Athlete - 2000s)



Ashley Dunigan (Cambridge High School, Class of 2002). It didn't matter if it was on the cross country course or the track, this Bobcat product shined on both surfaces.

Dunigan reset numerous meet and school records during her prep career, which actually started with a victory despite the fact that she took a wrong turn in a cross country race and got off course.

From that point on, Dunigan wouldn't slow down. Her career culminated in 2002 at Dayton's Welcome Stadium when she won the OHSAA Division II state championship in the 1600-meter run with a career-best time of 5:02.95.

Between those races, a lot of gold medals were earned. All told, Dunigan won 12 OVAC championships, sweeping the 800-, 1600- and 3200-meter runs each season. She scored an impressive 133.5 points during her career in the OVAC Track and Field Championships.

She didn't stop there. Dunigan was a four-time district champion, including a pair of titles in Division I. She was a four-time state qualifier, competing in the state meet in the 3200 as a frosh and sophomore and competing on a relay team as a junior before reaching the top of the podium as a senior.

Dunigan claimed four East Central Ohio League titles in both the 800 and 1600 meter runs.

At Cambridge, Dunigan's best times of 59.95 (400), 2:17.89 (800), 5:02.95 (1600) and 11:28.8) stood as school records. She was also part of the 4x400 record (4:06.21).

In cross country, Dunigan was a three-time all-state performer. She was twice a district champion and placed third three times in the regional. Her highest state-meet finish came in 1998 -- as a frosh -- when she finished 12th. She was 16th and 18th in her other All-Ohio finishes.

As a senior, she was the OVAC runner up. She won a trio of ECOL crowns and was named Female Runner of the Year each time.After her prep career – which also included being a four-time Academic All-Ohio selection - Dunigan competed at the Division I level, running for Wake Forest University. She spent four years working for the NCAA and was a finalist for the NCAA Presidential Award.

She's previously been inducted into the Cambridge High School (2017) and Eastern District Track and Cross Country halls of fame.

Lisa Ribble (Athlete - 1980s)



Lisa Ribble (Fort FryeHigh School, Class of 1981). Fort Frye has authored an illustrious girls' basketball history and Ribble remains one of the greatest ever to suit up for the Lady Cadet hoopsters.

She finished her Fort Frye hardwood career with 1,404 career points, 795 rebounds and 198 assists. Her all-around talent helped the Lady Cadets compile an impressive four-year record of 69-13 to go with three Pioneer Valley Conference championships and one OVAC crown.

Ribble made her presence felt as a Fort Frye frosh, averaging 9.2 points a game. She became a bigger force in the following three seasons, averaging 13.3 as a sophomore, 19.7 as a junior and a whopping 25 points a game as a senior. She also established an OVAC girls' single-game scoring record with 56 points, a mark later tied and broken by St. John Central legend Stephanie Petho.

Ribble was a first team Associated Press Class A All-Ohioan as a senior to go with All-OVAC and All-District first-team plaudits. She was honorable mention All-Ohio as a junior.

She was also a key member of the Lady Cadets' softball team as a centerfielder-pitcher. Fort Frye reached the OHSAA Class A State "Final Four" in 1980 and 1981, finishing as the state runner-up in Ribble's senior season.

Ribble took her basketball prowess to WVU, where she also became an integral part of the Lady Mountaineers' program. She was a four-year letter-winner and served as the team captain as a senior.

During her career in Morgantown, she scored 641 points, dished out 483 assists, collared 350 rebounds while recording 140 steals. Her multi-faceted game helped the Lady Mountaineers post a 74-45 record in her four years.

The 5-9 guard owns the distinction of assisting on an historic play. She made a length-of-the-court pass to 6-7 Georgeann Wells who delivered the first dunk by a woman in a college game - that coming on Dec. 21, 1984 against the University of Charleston.

Ribble was also a standout in the classroom, gaining first-team Academic All-Atlantic 10 honors as a junior and senior while also being named to the Academic All-East team as a senior.

She was chosen to the WVU women basketball team of the 1973-86 era. She was also inducted into the District 12 Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2014.

Bobby Sismondo (Athlete - 1990s)



Bobby Sismondo (Steubenville Catholi High School, Class of 1995). A record-setting pitcher in high school and college, Bobby Sismondo was one of the most dominant southpaw hurlers ever to come out of the OVAC.

Sismondo made an immediate impact as a sophomore at Steubenville Catholic Central when he helped the Crusaders make a run all the way to the Ohio Division III state semifinals. As a junior, he played a key role in SCC's 1994 state championship season by firing a 15-strikeout one-hit gem in a state semifinal win over Fort Jennings.

The hard-throwing lefty led the valley in strikeouts as a junior and senior. A first-team All-Ohio pick as a senior, he went 7-2 on the mound with a 1.01 ERA while striking out 112 batters in 69 innings. At the plate, he was third in the valley with a .493 batting average, scoring 25 runs and driving in 30 more. A 3-time first-team All-Valley selection and honorary captain as a senior, Sismondo set Ohio Valley records for career wins (35) and strikeouts (432).

The "Ks" just kept on coming during his three seasons (1996-98) as a Mid-American Conference ace at Ohio University when he set the school's all-time strikeout record with 254 career whiffs. That number still ranks No. 2 in the Bobcat record book while Sismondo's 24 career wins rank third.

He earned first-team All-MAC and All-Mideast Region honors as a sophomore when he won 11 games and fanned 106 batters in 101 innings. Those 11 wins and 106 strikeouts still rank among the school's Top 5 single-season efforts. The 1997 Bobcats were MAC champions and set a school record with 43 wins while earning a bid to the NCAA Mideast Regional in Oklahoma.

Sismondo was a 6th-round draft pick of the Detroit Tigers in the 1998 MLB Draft following his junior season at OU. After two years in the Tigers' organization, he was traded to Philadelphia and ultimately rose as high as Class AA with the Phillies and Milwaukee Brewers before retiring after the 2002 season.

Kinsi Tellep (Athlete - 2000s)



Kinsi Tellep (Meadowbrook High School, Class of 2009). Thanks to her powerful right arm, this former Colt was a star inside the circle on the softball field during her prep career.

Tellep led her team to the OHSAA Division II State Tournament in 2009, with the team posting an overall 22-8 record. During her final prep season, she spun four perfect games, including back-to-back 'perfectos' at one point. She hurled 15 shutouts, which included an astounding five straight during the tournament. She logged 39 consecutive scoreless innings and finished with a miniscule 0.41 earned run average. She also sat down 402 batters via the strikeout, which was fifth best in Ohio history, and had an incredible 37 strikeouts in an extra-inning game and 21 Ks in a seven-inning contest.

For her career, Tellep posted 1,260 strikeouts, which ranked third all-time in Ohio history when she graduated. The breakdown of her strikeouts also included 223 as a freshman, 327 as a sophomore and 308 as a junior. She finished with 68 pitching wins, 41 shutouts and a 0.77 ERA while at the plate, she hit .286 with 50 RBI.

Tellep's career by no means went unnoticed. She was first team All-Ohio as a junior and senior after gaining second team honors as a sophomore. She was a three-time OVAC Class 3A Player of the Year, named first team all-conference three times and second team once; was named All-Eastern District and All-ECOL first team four times, including Player of the Year as a for both; and she was also anointed First Team All-Valley three times.

While softball was where she made her biggest impact, Tellep was a four-year letterwinner in basketball for the Colts.

Tellep was a two-year letterwinner at the University of Akron.

PREVIOUS OVAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Alexa Abrams (Athlete - 2010s)



Alexa Abrams (Buckeye Trail High School, Class of 2011). This former Warrior standout not only competed in three sports -- volleyball, basketball and softball -- but she shined in each one.

While putting up impressive stats and garnering numerous accolades, it was on the volleyball court where Abrams made her greatest impact, becoming Trail's only three-time all-state performer.

Abrams finished her career with 1,227 kills and 411 blocks. As a senior, she posted 415 kills with 244 digs, 108 blocks and 36 aces en route to first team All-Ohio Division III acclaim. She was also OVAC Class 3A Player of the Year, All-District 12 and All-PVC and was the District 12 Player of the Year along with playing in the District 12 All-Star Game.

As a junior, Abrams was first-team All-OVAC, PVC and District 12, named OVAC Class 2A Player of the Year, and she was second team All-Ohio.

She was third-team All-State as a sophomore along with first-team All-OVAC and All-PVC.

On the basketball court, Abrams earned All-Eastern District, All-District 12, All-OVAC and All-PVC honors multiple times and was honorable mention All-Ohio as a sophomore. She also played in the District 12 All-Star Game

On the diamond, Abrams was a two-time All-OVAC performer and earned second team All-Ohio Division III as a senior. She was also All-Eastern District, All-PVC and took part in the OVAC All-Star Game.

After her prep career, Abrams went to Muskingum University where she played volleyball, lettering all four years. She was an honorable mention All-OAC player as a senior and finished her collegiate career with 628 kills, 135 assists, 60 aces, 1080 digs, 19 solo blocks and 78 block assists.

Hall of Fame

Hall of Fame

Dan Monteroso (Athlete - 2010s)



Dan Monteroso (St. Clairsville High School, Class of 2013). It didn't matter if it was on the football field or the basketball court, this former Red Devil was among the best to ever do it at St. Clairsville.

Monteroso was a four-year mainstay in both football and basketball and helped to guide the Red Devils to heights they'd never reached before in those sports.

In football, Monteroso was a standout at wide receiver and helped fuel the Red Devils to the 2012 OHSAA Division IV state championship game. He caught 68 passes for 1,483 yards and 17 touchdowns that season. He was named Eastern District Player of the Year, first-team All-Ohio, All-OVAC, All-Buckeye 8, All-Valley, All-Times Leader and received the Big 22 Player of the Year award. He also took part in the North-South All-Star Game.

During his career, Monteroso finished with 135 receptions for 2,741 yards and 34 touchdowns. He rushed for four touchdowns, threw for a score and had two interception returns for TDs. Defensively, he finished with 29 solo tackles and 48 assists.

On the basketball court, Monteroso was the unquestioned leader of the Red Devils.

He led the way to the OHSAA Division II state semifinals as a junior, averaging 26 points per game. He was named first-team All-Ohio, All-OVAC, All-Valley and All-Times Leader for his efforts.

As a senior, Monteroso averaged 27 points a game and led the Red Devils to another OVAC title and a trip to the regional tournament. He was named Division II Co-Player of the Year and a finalist for the prestigious 'Mr. Basketball' award.

He finished his hoops career with 2,340 points, which ranks 21st in Ohio history, and St. C. compiled an impressive 82-14 record during his career. Along with scoring, he is St. C.'s all-time leader in games played (95), two-point goals (715), free throws attempted (746) and made (565), single-season points (677) and single-season free throws made (169).

Monteroso inked a National Letter of Intent to continue his football career at Purdue University. He graduated with a degree in three years after earning academic all-Big Ten twice. He opted to play his final season of football at West Liberty and played two seasons of basketball for the Hilltoppers. He scored 1,134 points for the Hilltoppers, helping them to a pair of NCAA Tournament berths. He was named a pre and post season All-American as well as a finalist for the Bevo Francis Award, honoring the top small college men's basketball player in America. He was also named the Mountain East Conference Scholar Athlete of the Year twice and received the 2018 NCAA Division II Academic All-American of the Year.

Monteroso is currently overseas playing professional basketball in the German Pro A League for Ehingen Urspring.

We are.... The OVAC

OHIO VALLEY ATHLETIC CONFERENCE — FOUNDED 1943 — OVAC

BARNESVILLE
BEAVER LOCAL
BELLAIRE
BRIDGEPORT
BROOKE
BUCKEYE LOCAL
BUCKEYE TRAIL
CALDWELL
CAMBRIDGE
CAMERON
CLAY-BATTELLE
COLUMBIANA
CONOTTON VALLEY
EAST LIVERPOOL
EAST PALESTINE
EDISON
FORT FRYE
FRONTIER
HARRISON CENTRAL
HEARTLAND CHRISTIAN
INDIAN CREEK
JOHN MARSHALL
LEETONIA
LINSLY
LISBON ANDERSON
MADONNA
MAGNOLIA
MARIETTA
MARTINS FERRY
MONROE CENTRAL
MORGANTOWN
OAK GLEN
PARKERSBURG SOUTH
RIVER
SHADYSIDE
SHENANDOAH
SOUTHERN LOCAL
ST. CLAIRSVILLE
STEUBENVILLE
STEUBENVILLE CATHOLIC
TORONTO
TRINITY CHRISTIAN
UNION LOCAL
UNITED LOCAL
UNIVERSITY
VALLEY
VALLEY CHRISTIAN
WARREN
WEIR
WELLSVILLE
WHEELING CENTRAL
WHEELING PARK
WOOD COUNTY CHRISTIAN

LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2005



V. Everett Brinkman



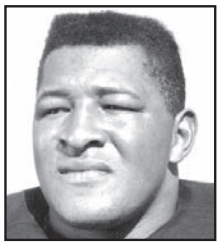
Clarence 'Bevo' Francis



Lou 'The Toe' Groza



Clarke Hinkle



Calvin Jones

Legends of OVAC member schools honors those great athletes who played or coached in the Ohio Valley prior to the formation of the conference in 1943 or who played or coached after that date but before their school became a member of the conference.

V. Everett Brinkman (Wheeling High School, Class of 1923)

One of only three13-letter winners in football, basketball, baseball and track at Wheeling High, he was an all-state football end and scored 54 points in a basketball game as a freshman. He became a three-sport, nine-letter standout at W. Va. Wesleyan College before returning to the Ohio Valley to earn his mark in coaching.

A pioneer of the jump shot and fast break, Brinkman coached Benwood Union from 1928-33 and Wheeling High from 1934-55 to a combined 405-193 record. At Wheeling, his teams were 356-138 with five state titles in seven trips to the finals. The 1938 and 1950 teams were unbeaten. Other state titles were won in 1936, 1940 and 1943. The '40 and '43 teams lost but once.

Brinkman also coached football for 14 years — six at Benwood Union and eight at Wheeling, with a combined record of 87-32-15 including 40-9-4 at Union. Four of his gridiron teams claimed state titles in the pre-official state playoff era: 1928 and 1931 Union, both unbeaten, and at Wheeling in 1934 and 1937. The '34 team was unbeaten but twice tied.

He also was a top-flight football official for several years and active in state coaches and officials' organizations.

Brinkman earlier was elected to four Halls of Fame — West Virginia Sports, Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan, City of Wheeling, and W. Va. Wesleyan Sports.

Clarence 'Bevo' Francis (Wellsville High School, Class of 1952)

A record-setting basketball scoring machine in high school and college who attracted national attention and was profiled in numerous books, national magazines and major newspapers. Two books were written on his career.

The 6-9, 190-pounder played only one season at Wellsville High after sitting out a year following transfer from Irondale. In 1952, he scored 776 points in 25 games with 31-point average, second best in Ohio. He outscored six opposing teams with highs of 57, 54 and 50 points. Wellsville lost only to 28-1 record state runner-up Steubenville and handed W. Va. Class B champion Newell two of its three losses.

He followed Wellsville coach Newt Oliver to Rio Grande College and played two seasons, In 1953, he scored 1,954 points in 39 games for national record 50.1 per game average. He scored 116 vs. Ashland Junior College. In 1954, he averaged 46.5 points and scored 113 vs. Hillsdale College. The schedule included wins over Wake Forest, Providence, Butler and Creighton and games in Madison Square Garden, Boston Garden and Miami Beach Auditorium.

The NAIA Hall of Famers left school to join the Boston Whirlwinds and tour with the Harlem Globetrotters. He also played in the Eastern and ABL pro leagues before retiring in 1962.

Lou 'The Toe' Groza (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1942)

The Purple Rider luminary is best known as a record-setting professional football placekicker, but he was much more.

In high school, he was a three-sport standout and All-Ohio in football and basketball. He was center, and the state tournament's leading scorer, on the 27-2 record Rider team which won the 1941 state Class A title. He also was a tackle on the 10-0-1 record 1941 football team which claimed an Ohio co-championship after a 14-14 tie with Toledo Libbey in a post-season challenge game. Groza, by the way, kicked only one field goal in high school.

He played football as a freshman at Ohio State before joining the armed services which preceded his 21-year career with the Cleveland Browns which ended in 1967.

When he retired, he was pro football's all-time leading scorer with only one TD and 1,609 points. He booted 234 field goals, with a long of 53 yards. He had conversion streak of 134 and scored in 107 straight games. The Lou Groza Award is given annually to college football's top placekicker.

A nine-time Pro Bowl offensive tackle, as well as kicker, he played in nine NFL title games, with four titles, and played on four All-American Conference title teams.

The Pro Football and Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Famer had his jersey No. 76 retired by the Browns. A portion of Route 7 is named for him in Martins Ferry.

Clarke Hinkle (Toronto High School, Class of 1926)

This versatile early era football player left such an impression on his alma mater that the Toronto High School Football Stadium behind the school is named in his honor.

The 5-11, 195-pound athlete also left an enduring imprint at Bucknell University, where he was inducted into the first Hall of Fame class, and in the National Football League. He was inducted, in 1964, in the second class of the Pro Football Hall of Fame. He's also a member of the Halls of Fame for College Football and the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dans.

At Bucknell from 1929-31, he led the East in scoring with 128 points in 1929 and later his team to an unbeaten season in 1931. He then played in the East-West Game where he was selected the Most Outstanding Player.

From 1932-41, the Green Bay Packer star was one of the most versatile players in the National Football League. He was a fullback-linebacker-punter-placekicker, and was cited for his running, blocking, receiving, kicking and tackling.

Hinkle was first or second team all-league all 10 seasons and four-time All-Pro. He was on the NFL All-Time Two-Way team selected in 1994. One of the Packer practice fields is named in his honor.

When he retired, he was the leading rusher (3,860 yards on 1,171 carries) in NFL history and his totals now rank sixth in Packer history. He scored 379 career points and averaged 40.8 yards punting.

Calvin Jones (Steubenville High School, Class of 1952)

This two-sport Big Red standout was a high school basketball rival of fellow honoree Bevo Francis but is best known for football.

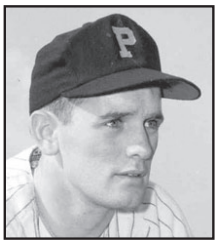
At Big Red, he helped the 1952 basketball team to a school-best 28-1 record and Ohio Class A runner-up finish. En route, Big Red handed the Francis-led Wellsville team its only two losses.

In football, the All-Ohio lineman selected the University of Iowa over Ohio State and went on to All-Big Ten Conference honors three times. He made 22 All-America teams at guard, including a record 15 in 1954. As team captain, he earned the Outland Trophy given to the nation's top interior lineman and became one of only two consensus All-America picks at Iowa, where he played both offense and defense.

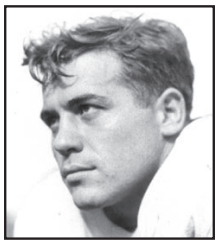
A member of the College Football and Helms Athletic Foundation Halls of Fame, he was inducted into the first Iowa Hall of Fame class and is a member of the All-Time Hawkeye team. His jersey No. 62 was retired by Iowa, one of only two at the school.

He was the first African-American athlete pictured on the cover of Sports Illustrated.

LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2006



Bernie Allen



Russ Craft



Carl Hamill



Bernie Mehen



Jule Rivlin

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Bernie Allen (East Liverpool High School, Class of 1957)

A 10-letter winner in three sports for the Potters, he was a quarterback-placekicker for the 8-2 record 1956 football team; a regular basketball player on team which upset unbeaten Steubenville in the sectional tournament; and an all-state baseball infielder. He played in the Ohio All-Star Baseball Game and was on winning Ohio football team in annual Ohio-West Virginia All-Star Game.

At Purdue University, he earned six letters as football quarterback and baseball shortstop and was team MVP in both sports and All-Big Ten in baseball.

Allen earned National Football Back of Week honors from The Associated Press and Sports Illustrated for play in upset of Ohio State. He was Purdue's Outstanding Senior Athlete for 1960-61.

Allen signed a pro baseball contract in 1961 with the Minnesota Twins. After spending one year in the minor leagues at Charlotte, N.C., he went on to a 12-year major league career from 1962-73 with the Twins, Washington Senators, New York Yankees and Montreal Expos. In 1962, he was runner-up to the Yankees' Tom Tresh for the American League Rookie of the Year honors. He batted .269 with 12 home runs in 1962. In 1972, he hit three home runs in the Hall of Fame game in Cooperstown, N.Y.

He's been inducted into four other halls of fame. In 1999, he became the fifth inductee into the Purdue Hall and was a charter inductee into the East Liverpool Hall of Fame. He's also in the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan and Lou Holtz Ohio Valley Halls of Fame.

Russ Craft (Wellsburg High School, Class of 1939)

He was a three-sport performer in football, basketball and baseball for the Orange Knights and earned All-Valley and All-State honors as a senior football back.

Craft played football, baseball and ran track at the University of Alabama, where he was a two-way back regular in football and earned second team All-Southeastern Conference honors.

Drafted in 1943 by the Philadelphia Eagles of the National Football League, he played eight seasons (1946-53) as a defensive back-kick returner and was selected to the All-Time Eagles' Team. He played on Eagles' teams which won NFL titles in 1948 and 1949 and finished second in 1947. He was named to the Pro Bowl in 1951 and 1952. He is tied for the current NFL record of four pass interceptions in one game against the Cardinals in 1950. He also blocked three Pittsburgh Steeler extra-point kicks in 1952 game and returned a kickoff for a ten team record 103 yards against the Rams in 1950.

Craft is credited as the first player in the NFL to wear the new hard plastic helmet in 1951. He ended his NFL career in two seasons as a player-assistant coach with the Steelers. In 1995, he was included in the NFL Films' presentation of the 100 Greatest Touchdowns in NFL History. It featured his defensive theft, and 20-yard TD return, of a pass reception caught by NFL Hall of Famer Elroy (Crazylegs) Hirsch of the Rams.

Craft is inducted into the W. Va. Sports Hall of Fame and the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall.

Carl Hamill (Linsly School, Class of 1922)

A legendary athlete and high school coach in the Ohio Valley, he was a three-sport standout at Linsly and Bethany College. An All-Valley football player, he also scored an unheard-of 330 points in 21 basketball games in 1920, a rare total in the center jump, low-scoring era.

From 1929-51, he was the three-sport coach at Weir High. His football teams scheduled top-notch programs from three states and went 166-35-13 including a 111-10 mark vs. Mountain State teams. He coached six unbeaten teams and four with only one loss. Three state titles were claimed in 1935, 1942 and 1949 when the Red Riders won the first-ever WVSSAC largest class state playoff title and the school narrowly missed a state title trifecta. Later that school year, he coached the 1950 baseball team to its second state one-class crown (the other was in 1945). The 1949-50 basketball team lost a 38-37 regional title game to unbeaten Wheeling High, which went on to win the championship. He was selected West Virginia "Coach of the Year" for high school and college all sports.

In basketball, he guided Weir to a 370-127 record and six state tournament berths. Weir was runner-up in 1942.

Hamill has been inducted into several halls of fame, including W. Va. Sports, Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan, Bethany College and was the first inductee into the Ohio Valley Football Coaches Hall. The annual Dapper Dan coaching award is named for him and he was one of three prominent Weirton community leaders pictured on a downtown mural. The Weir High Fieldhouse is named in his honor.

Bernie Mehen (Wheeling High School, Class of 1938)

The first Ohio Valley athlete to be selected first team all-state basketball three straight years, he led the Wildcats to W. Va. state titles in 1936 and 1938 including a 24-0 record in 1938.

During those three years that he was the leading scorer, Wheeling High was 65-4 under Hall of Fame coach Everett Brinkman. Mehen scored 1,193 points in 84 career games with many coming during the center jump, low scoring era.

He later earned All-America and All-Southeastern Conference recognition at the University of Tennessee, where he helped the Vols win the 1941 Southeastern Conference championship. After serving in World War II, where he was wounded, he played professionally with the Youngstown Bears and Toledo Jeeps.

He was inducted into the City of Wheeling Hall of Fame in 1992.

Jule Rivlin (Triadelphia High School, Class of 1935)

He was an all-state basketball guard in high school where he led the Triads to a 20-1 record in 1934. He also was the high-point scorer in the 1935 one-class state track meet where he won three gold medals. He timed 10.2 for 100 yards, 22.8 for 220 yards and was a member of the medley relay winning unit.

At Marshall College, he was one of the first guards to run the fast break offense for state Hall of Fame coach Cam Henderson and earned Little All-America honors while setting a school season scoring record with 530 points. He helped the Herd to two Buckeye Conference titles. He later coached the Marshall basketball team to two Mid America Conference titles.

He played professionally with the Toledo Jeeps and was player-coach of the Wheeling Blues from 1950-52.

In 1947, he was the Most Valuable Player in the World Tournament in Chicago which featured the nation's best pro teams including the Harlem Globetrotters.

He was a 1980 charter inductee into the City of Wheeling Hall of Fame and is a member of four other halls of fame, including W. Va. Sports, Marshall and Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan.

LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2007



Rudy Baric



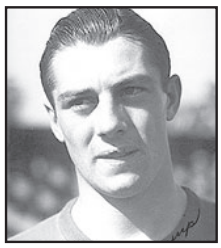
Mike Basrak



Les Carney



Charles 'Doc' Hartwig



Jim 'Monk' Moscrip

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Rudy Baric (Benwood Union High School, Class of 1938)

He was a first team All-W.Va. basketball honoree as a senior when the OVAC charter member school bowed to unbeaten Wheeling High in the section finals. As a junior, he helped the Ironmen to a state tournament berth and the school's best-ever record of 23-2.

At West Virginia University, the 6-3 center captained the 1942 team which won the National Invitation Tournament championship in New York's Madison Square Garden when the NIT was more prestigious than the NCAA Tournament. After a 16-4 regular season record, the Mountaineers were seeded last in the eight-team event before they upset top-seeded Long Island U., 52-49, in the first round. WVU then defeated Toledo, 51-39, and Western Kentucky, 47-45, before 17,000 fans in the finals. The team's only 6-footer was the team's leading rebounder and second-highest scorer and was selected tournament MVP. The three-year regular helped WVU to a 45-20 record.

In 1943, with WVU coach Dyke Raese in the armed services, Baric served as interim coach and guided WVU to a 14-7 record. He then went on to coach high school basketball for 19 years at Penns Grove, N. J., where his teams won more than 300 games.

A member of the All-Time WVU era team, he was inducted into the second WVU Hall of Fame class and is a W. Va. Sports HOF inductee.

Mike Basrak (Bellaire High School, Class of 1931)

The 6-3, 210-pound football center started 22 games in his Big Reds' career and earned All-Eastern Ohio and All-Valley honors before becoming the first college All-America player from Bellaire and the first in Duquesne University history. He started 30 games at Duquesne and was selected All-America by the A-A board, The Associated Press and other major selectors. Bellaire displayed its pride for its hometown hero by placing a 10-foot pictorial banner above the front entrance to the City Building.

In the second National Football League Draft of 1937, Basrak was the fifth overall league selection in the first round by the Pittsburgh Pirates, later renamed the Steelers. No other OVAC product has been drafted earlier than Basrak. Weirton's Bob Gain, inducted into the OVAC Hall in 2006, also was a fifth pick. Basrak played two seasons in the NFL.

Les Carney (Wintersville High School, Class of 1952)

A 10-letter winner in four sports — football, basketball, baseball and track — for the Warriors, the football running back played in only one losing game in three seasons for Coach Bob McFarren. Wintersville, however, didn't join the OVAC until 1955 after Carney accepted a scholarship to Ohio University.

As a sophomore OU running back, he earned honorable mention All-Mid American Conference for the MAC champions before being called to military service.

After returning, he led the Bobcats' track team to the 1958 and 1959 MAC titles while earning NCAA All-America honors as a senior. He held the NCAA 220-yard dash record of 20.8 seconds for one day. The two-time MAC 220-yard champion set a conference record which lasted 21 years. He also won the conference 100-yard crown with a 9.7-second clocking. At one time, he claimed all or parts of five school individual or relay records.

Carney was drafted by the NFL Baltimore Colts, but bypassed the offer for a job in his current hometown of Akron where he competed in AAU track meets. He earned a spot on the U.S. team for the 1959 Pan-American Games and won a silver medal at 200 meters.

In 1960, he placed third in the U.S. Olympic Trials at 200 meters and earned a spot on the U.S. team for the Rome Olympics. In the 200-meter finals, he earned a silver medal in a photo finish with hometown hero Livio Berutti of Italy, who set an Olympic record of 20.5 seconds. Carney's time of 20.6 would have won every previous Olympic final including the 1936 Games won by the legendary Jesse Owens in 20.7.

Charles 'Doc' Hartwig (Benwood Union High School, Class of 1930)

An All-Valley and All-West Virginia football lineman who went on to earn national fame and recognition at the University of Pittsburgh. He played for Coach Everett Brinkman at Union and helped the Ironmen to the school's first unbeaten season of 8-0 in 1928. At Pitt, he was selected team captain, starred in the 1933 Rose Bowl, and earned All-America honors in 1934 after coming back from an injury which forced him to miss his sophomore season. The 1934 Pitt team was acclaimed national champions. The three-year letterman played on Panther teams with a combined 24-3-2 record.

He also played in the East-West Shrine Game along with fellow honoree Jim Moscrip and Michigan's Gerald Ford, a future U.S. president.

Hartwig became a national hero when he was pictorially featured on a Wheaties cereal box, the only Ohio Valley athlete so honored.

He coached Moundsville High in 1938 and Martins Ferry High the next two years before returning to Pitt to join the athletic department.

Hartwig died in 1950 after a lingering illness and Benwood Union named its football field, Hartwig Field, after the school's only All-American.

Jim 'Monk' Moscrip (Adena High School, Class of 1931)

He earned 10 letters in three sports — football, basketball and baseball — and was an All-Eastern Ohio and All-Valley football end under Coach Fred Thomas. He led the 1930 football team to a 9-1-1 record as the Golden Wave outscored foes, 284-19. He also the MVP of the county basketball tournament.

After spending a year at Kiski Prep in Saltsburg, Pa., the 6-foot, 186-pounder became a three-year starter at Stanford University and played on the famed "Vow Boys" team — so named for vowing not to lose to Southern California during their career. Moscrip and teammates kept their promise and defeated USC three times and compiled a 25-4-2 record while becoming the first team to play in three straight Rose Bowls. Stanford won twice and Moscrip, a two-way end and placekicker, was MVP of the 1936 Rose Bowl win over SMU. He also played in the East-West Shrine Game.

He was selected by the old NFL Brooklyn Dodgers in the first NFL Draft in 1936, but his NFL career was two seasons with the Detroit Lions.

A member of the All-Time Stanford team, he was inducted into the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame and the College Football Hall of Fame.

LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2008



Ernie Bell



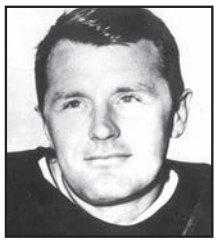
John Blatnik



George Burgwin



Kenny Griffith



Jim Keane

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Ernie Bell (East Liverpool High School, Class of 1953).

He was a two-way line standout on the unbeaten 1952 Potter football team regarded as one of the best in school history.

The 160-pound guard was named to five All-Ohio first team selections, and an Ohio Lineman of the Year selection by the International News Service after the 9-0-1 record team was voted No. 3 in the final statewide poll.

The Potters defeated Cleveland West, Steubenville, New Philadelphia, Youngstown Rayen, Alliance, Martins Ferry, Salem, Ashtabula and Wellsville and tied Sandusky, 13-13.

Opposing teams found it almost impossible to keep Bell out of their backfield. Alliance quarterback Len Dawson, a future star at Purdue University and the Kansas City Chiefs, was sacked several times by Bell and he lauded the Potter defender as the best he faced all season.

Bell also blocked four punts in one game of his four-year career.

An inductee into the East Liverpool High School Hall of Fame, Bell also was a member of the winning North team in the annual Ohio North-South game.

John Blatnik (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1939).

He was a two-sport Bulldog standout who signed a pro baseball contract before his senior high school season. He was a member of two teams which advanced to the Ohio state basketball tournament in the largest Class A division.

The 1938 team, coached by Floyd Baker, defeated Bowling Green and Akron St. Vincent before bowing to eventual champion Newark in the semifinals. In 1939, under coach Stan Plummer, the Bulldogs defeated Akron Buchtel in the tournament before bowing to eventual champion Akron North in the quarterfinals.

Baseball was where Blatnik earned fame in high school and the pros, however. He competed for Coach Orville (Tubby) Edmundson in high school and played for the Fred Englehardt-coached Bridgeport National Bank Juniors in the summer. Between his junior and senior prep seasons, he worked out for six weeks with the Cleveland Indians and signed a contract with scout Bill Bradley but played his final high school season.

After graduation, he started his pro career with Greensburg, Pa., in the Class D Penn State League. He then competed, as a first baseman and outfielder, in Fargo, N.D., and Charleston, W.Va., before serving from 1942-46 in the Air Force. He returned to play in Harrisburg and Wilkes-Barre, Pa., before being called up by the Philadelphia Phillies. He competed for the Phillies and St. Louis Cardinals for two full seasons, plus minor league stops, from 1948-56 before retiring from baseball.

George 'Puck' Burgwin (Steubenville High School, Class of 1933).

A legendary early era four-sport Big Red who set school and Ohio Valley football rushing records while playing for 31-3 record teams against top tri-state competition from 1929-32.

He was the anchor of the 9-0 record, unscored-upon Big Red team of 1930 and a program which reeled off an OV record 17 straight shutout wins. As a junior, he rushed for 2,126 yards and scored 196 points in nine games — both Big Red records after 75 years and OV standards for six decades.

His career totals of 541 points and 5,614 rushing yards are both Big Red school records.

A two-way football player and kicker, he also excelled in track, baseball and basketball and some of his school track records lasted until the early 1950s.

He played one college season for Western Reserve before leaving school and played in 1947-48 for the Steubenville semi-pro team. He's inducted into the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame.

Burgwin died of a heart attack at age 37 in 1951.

Kenny Griffith (Wellsburg High School, Class of 1937).

He was a senior standout on the 1937 Orange team which won its first, and only, OVAA championship with an 18-1 regular season record. It ended a school-best 22-2 season, under coach Reed Clark, in the regional finals with a loss to Benwood Union.

He enrolled at Alderson-Broaddus College, where he became a national scoring sensation under Coach Rex Pyles. He broke the national career scoring record of 1,596 points set by national Hall of Famer Hank Luisetti of Stanford by scoring 1,941 points in four seasons. Griffith led the nation in scoring his last two seasons (1940 with a 23.9 average and 1941 at 22.0) and became the first West Virginia Conference player to average 20 points for a season.

In 1941, the small college All-American became the first state basketball player to be selected the W. Va. Amateur Athlete of the Year. He also competed in a national All-Star game in Chicago.

An Alderson-Broaddus Hall of Famer who is featured on the walls of the school gymnasium, he was selected to the all-time West Virginia Conference team.

After college, the 6-foot-2 Griffith played briefly in 1942 with the pro Akron Goodyears.

Jim Keane (Linsly Military Institute, Class of 1941).

The Bellaire native was a six-sport Cadet letterman in football, basketball, track, golf, tennis and boxing. He earned All-Valley honors in football and received a football scholarship to the University of Iowa. He finished his career at Northwestern University in Chicago.

A 6-foot-4, 208-pound end, he was drafted in the 18th round by the Chicago Bears in 1945 and played seven seasons in the National Football League — the first six with the Bears and one with the Green Bay Packers. In his rookie season, the Bears defeated the New York Giants, 24-14 in the NFL championship game.

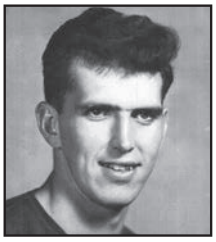
In his second season, he led the NFL in pass receiving with 64 catches for 910 yards and 10 touchdowns in 12 games.

His seven-year, 81-game NFL career included 224 pass receptions for 3,222 yards and 24 touchdowns.

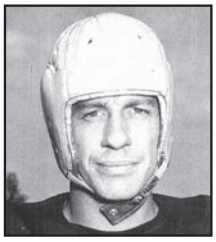
LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2009



Tom Kinkade



Fred Negus



Charley Seabright



Nick Skorich



Moffat Storer

Legends of OVAC member schools honors those great athletes who played or coached in the Ohio Valley prior to the formation of the conference in 1943 or who played or coached after that date but before their school became a member of the conference.

Tom Kinkade (Toronto High School, Class of 1938)

He was a football and basketball standout for the Red Knights before excelling in football at Ohio State University.

As a senior in high school, he led Toronto to a school record 19-2 record with only a regular season split with Weir High marring an unbeaten season. The 1938 team advanced to the regional tournament finals, the farthest in school history, before bowing, 50-49 to state tournament-bound Bridgeport.

The 6-foot-1, 190-pound Kinkade was selected All-Ohio by The Associated Press and led all scorers with a 25-point average. Toronto averaged 53 points a game.

In a 82-31 rout of Midland, Pa., Kinkade scored a school record 52 points on 23 goals and six free throws. It was the second highest Ohio Valley effort at the time and lasted as a school record for 30 years.

A quarterback in football, he was recruited by Ohio State and was a three-year letterman and two-way regular as a running back-linebacker on teams which finished 6-2 and Big Ten Conference champions in 1939 and 6-1-1 in 1941 under first-year coach Paul Brown. He was drafted by the Green Bay Packers in 1942, but opted not to play pro football.

Fred Negus (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1940)

He was a three-sport, three-year Purple Rider athlete in football, basketball and baseball and earned All-Valley honors as a junior center and senior fullback while serving as team captain in two sports.

After a year in prep school, he played football two years at the University of Wisconsin and earned All-Big Ten as a sophomore center on an 8-1-1 record team ranked No. 3 in the nation. After enlisting in the Marine Corp Reserve, he earned All-Big Ten center as a junior at the University of Michigan and also lettered in track. After a year in the active U.S. Marine Corp where he competed on the Marines' football team, he was drafted by the NFL's Cleveland Rams, but opted to return to the University of Wisconsin. He earned his third All-Big Ten first center honors and competed for the College All-Star team against the Chicago Bears.

After college, he played three seasons in Chicago in the All-American Football Conference and the 1950 season with the Chicago Bears.

In 1998, he was inducted into the University of Wisconsin Athletic Hall of Fame. In 2005, he died at age 83 in Fort Atkinson, Wis.

Charley Seabright (Benwood Union High School, Class of 1937)

He was a three-sport standout in football, basketball and baseball at old Benwood Union High, earning All-West Virginia one-class honors in football and basketball and was All-Valley in football. As a senior, he led the Ironmen to a school-best 23-2 basketball record and sectional and regional titles plus a state tournament berth. During that run, the Ironmen ended a 33-game winning streak of defending state champion Wheeling.

At West Virginia University, he earned seven letters and is one of only 12 athletes in school history to earned letters in football, basketball and baseball. A three-year starter as blocking back, single-wing quarterback and linebacker, he also batted .300 as a left-handed baseball first baseman and played guard in basketball.

He was selected to the WVU football all-time decade team (1940-49) and was a 2004 inductee into the WVU Sports Hall of Fame. In 1977, he was inducted into the West Virginia Sports Hall of Fame.

In 1941, Seabright played with the NFL's Cleveland Rams before serving in the U.S. Army. After the war, he played five seasons (1946-50) as one of the last two-way offensive-defensive players in the NFL as blocking back-linebacker with the Pittsburgh Steelers. He started on the 8-4 record 1947 team regarded as the best in team history prior to the 1970s. He was selected in the 1970s on an All-Time Steeler Defensive Team.

After residing and working in the Ohio Valley for three decades, he died in 1981.

Nick Skorich (Bellaire High School, Class of 1939)

He was a three-sport Big Reds' athlete in football, basketball and track and earned All-Valley honors as a football center while playing on three teams which won titles in the OVAA, the forerunner of the OVAC. The three teams had records of 9-1, 8-2 and 9-1.

He earned a football scholarship to the University of Cincinnati where he was team captain as a senior and earned honors on the All-Ohio college selections.

Skorich was drafted by the Pittsburgh Steelers in 1943 before serving in the U.S. Navy. After military service, he played three seasons as guard for the Steelers before turning to coaching — first in high school before serving as an assistant with the Steelers, Green Bay and Philadelphia before becoming Eagles' head coach for three seasons. He then joined the Cleveland Browns' staff and became the Browns' head coach from 1971-74. After leaving Cleveland, he capped his career as supervisor of officials for the National Football League. He died in 2004.

Moffat Storer (The Linsly School, Class of 1939)

He was a three-sport Cadet standout in football, basketball and track where he set the longest-lasting Ohio Valley and W. Va. record in the 100-yard dash.

An All-Valley fullback, he helped Linsly to 7-2 and 9-2 records as a sophomore and junior but is best known for his record-setting first place finish in the 1939 Intelligencer Tri-State Track Meet, the most prestigious meet in the area at the time. He clocked 9.7 seconds for 100 yards which remained on the OV record books for four decades and was the best-ever in West Virginia until 1972.

He continued his football and track career at Duke University where he was a starting back in the 1942 Rose Bowl game against Oregon State. It was played in Durham, N.C., the only time outside Pasadena, Calif., because of World War II in the Pacific. He also starred on the Blue Devils' track team and led the sprint relay unit to a victory in the prestigious Penn Relays.

Storer was drafted by the NFL Chicago Cardinals but, after graduation, served in the armed forces.

He lived in Chattanooga, Tenn., for several years, and is deceased.

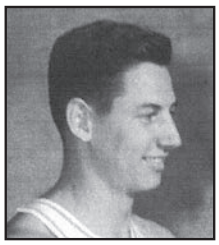
LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2010



Floyd Baker



Carl Hoppel



Dick Mehen



Will Robinson



Jack Simons

Legends of OVAC member schools honors those great athletes who played or coached in the Ohio Valley prior to the formation of the conference in 1943 or who played or coached after that date but before their school became a member of the conference.

Floyd Baker — The graduate of Wittenberg University left his boys' basketball coaching imprint on the Ohio Valley from 1932-45.

He put Bridgeport High on the roundball map during a golden era from 1934-40 when the Bulldogs had three straight 20-win seasons (20-5, 27-4 and 23-3, all by Baker), five sectional crowns (three by Baker), and four straight Ohio state tournament berths (three by Baker), reaching the semifinals in 1936 and 1938, a team that included OVAC Legend John Blatnik. His seven-year Bulldog coaching record was 118-56.

Baker then moved over to rival Martins Ferry, where he enjoyed even more success and became the only area coach to guide two different schools to the Ohio state tournament, highlighted by the 1941 Ohio championship squad.

He started the Purple Riders' golden era in basketball, which lasted from 1939-54 and included 12 sectional titles, six by Baker-coached teams.

His final six Ferry teams won more than 20 games. From 1941-45, his teams went 122-9. That included the 29-2 record title team of 1941, led by Hall of Famer Lou Groza, and followed by records of 22-3, 24-1, 25-1 and 21-2. A 33-game winning streak ended in 1942. The 1944 team (26-1), led by Hall of Famer Alex Groza, won the first OVAC Class AA title. His seven-year Ferry record was 159-21.

Baker's 14-year Ohio Valley coaching record was 277-77, with seven Ohio state tournament berths and the 1941 Ohio largest Class A championship. He left Ferry for a job in Richmond, Ind.

Carl Hoppel (Beaver Local High School, Class of 1962). The youngest of five sons to Everett and Lee Hoppel, a famous wrestling family known throughout Ohio, he became the first freshman to win an Ohio wrestling championship in 1959. Had it not been for a highly-disputed takedown in the last few seconds of his semifinal match as a sophomore, where he placed third, he could have been a four-time state champion. He went on to win Ohio titles as a junior and senior to become a three-time champion.

Hoppel, who also played football at Beaver, was never pinned in four years and finished his career with a 99-2 won-loss record and three state championships. He was honored at the 2000 Ohio State Wrestling Tournament as one of the Top 15 "Greatest Ohio High School Wrestlers."

For 10 straight years, from 1953-62, the five Hoppel brothers competed in the Ohio State Tournament and had 12 state placers including six champions — three by the youngest son, Carl. The four oldest sons competed for East Liverpool High.

Carl Hoppel, a retired businessman, was once owner of Hoppel Enterprises, Hoppel Block and Brick and co-owner of West Point Electric.

Dick Mehen (Wheeling High School, Class of 1940). He and older brother Bernie Mehen, who was honored as an OVAC Legend in 2006, became the first two West Virginia basketball players to earn all-class, first team all-state basketball honors three times. The 6-foot-5 center was honored as all-state captain in 1940 when the Wildcats went 23-1 and won the second state title in three years and also claimed the OVAA championship. The OVAA was a conference forerunner of the OVAC.

In 1938, when both Dick and Bernie Mehen started for the Wildcats, Wheeling High went 24-0 and won a state title for Coach Everett Brinkman, an OVAC Legends charter selection. The Wildcats went 64-3 in the three years that Dick Mehen was a starter.

As a senior, Mehen scored 556 points to lead the Ohio Valley, and probably the state of West Virginia, and ended his prep career with more than 1,300 points, a high total for that era.

Dick joined Bernie at the University of Tennessee and earned two first team All-Southeastern Conference honors and was second team All-America. He then played five years of pro basketball in the pre-NBA era, including the Toledo Jeeps coached by Triadelphia High product and OVAC Legend, Jule Rivlin.

Will Robinson (Steubenville High School, Class of 1933). A five-sport Big Red letterman in football, basketball, baseball and track, he was the "T" quarterback on the 1930 9-0 record football team which was unbeaten, untied and unscored-upon and also featured OVAC Legend George (Puck) Burgwin. Big Red went 26-1 in his three years at quarterback.

He was also a fine golfer, placing second in the Ohio state tournament.

At West Virginia State, Robinson captained three teams in three sports, won 12 varsity letters, and quarterbacked the 1936 national Negro championship team.

He became a legendary high school coach in Detroit where his 28 teams won 85 percent of their games while producing numerous college and pro athletes at Cass Tech and Pershing High School.

In 1970, he became the first black to become head basketball coach at a major university — Illinois State — where he coached Olympian and NBA player Doug Collins. After five winning seasons, he returned to Detroit to join the NBA Pistons' staff as a scout.

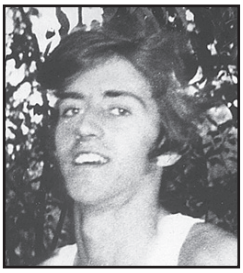
He's also a member of several Halls of Fame including W. Va. State, Illinois State, Michigan Sports Hall, and Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dans. He died, at age 96, in 2008.

Jack Simons (New Cumberland High School, Class of 1920). He has held the Ohio Valley single-season football scoring record for 90 years. In 1919, he scored 38 touchdowns and 60 extra points for a record 288 points. He was a four-year, four-sport (football, basketball, baseball, track) performer at the school which was merged, along with Chester and Newell, into the current Oak Glen High School. He became the first New Cumberland athlete, in 1919, to earn first team all-state football honors.

At West Virginia University, he was a four-year starter (1920-23) at halfback and fullback as well as linebacker. He started on the 10-0-1 record 1922 team, the only unbeaten team in school history, He was captain of the 7-1-1 record 1923 team and is a member of the 1919-29 all-time WVU decade team.

In 1924, he spent one year as player-coach of the professional Steubenville Pros. He also became athletic director and started the football program at old St. Francis High School in 1931 and coached until 1938 including two 9-0 record teams. Simons has been inducted into the WVU Sports Hall of Fame and the W. Va. State Sports Hall of Fame. He died, at age 96, in 1997 in Morgantown, where he operated an insurance agency.

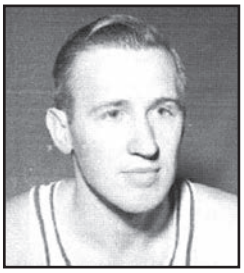
LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2011



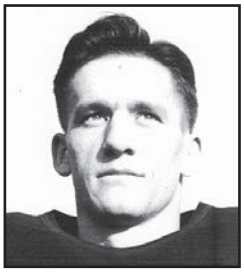
Bob Bentz



'Punque' Cartledge



Jim Jordan



Cas Myslinski



Norman Willey

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Bob Bentz (Beaver Local High School, Class of 1972). In high school, he dominated the area and Ohio distance running scene while setting school 1,600- and 3,200-meter school records which remain on the books.

He became the first sub-nine minute 3,200-meter runner in Ohio history (8:58) and his 4:20 time in the 1,600 remains on the school record books. As a junior, he won the Ohio Class AA cross country title and placed second in the state meet 2-mile run.

As a senior, Bentz was undefeated in cross country and track while setting an Ohio two-mile record. He earned All-America status by placing third with a time of 8:58.4 for two miles at the High School Track & Field National Meet in Baton Rouge, La.

Recruited by the University of Tennessee, he led the Vols to four unbeaten cross country seasons, four Southeastern Conference titles and the 1972 NCAA title. In track, his teams won three SEC crowns and the 1974 NCAA championship. He contributed to 11 SEC titles in four cross country and track seasons while earning All-SEC honors.

Charles "Punque" Cartledge (Steubenville High School, Class of 1912). The first area inductee into the Ohio Football Coaches Hall of Fame and the initial honoree in the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame, he put Big Red football on the area and Ohio maps with a 22-year record of 140-38-11 from 1916-40.

His teams outscored foes by 3,772-870 and dealt famed Massillon its worst loss ever, 68-0, in 1931. That team was led by OVAC Hall of Fame Legends George (Puck) Burgwin and Will Robinson. The Big Red schedule during that era included top team from around Ohio and western Pennsylvania.

In a pre-playoff era, his Big Red teams were acclaimed Ohio state champions five times (1925, 1926, 1930, 1931, 1935). He coached seven unbeaten teams and three one-loss squads.

From 1922-26, Big Red was unbeaten in 45 games against high school teams, with a lone defeat in 1924 to the Carnegie College freshmen. They had 35 shutouts in 46 games. In 1930-31 seasons, they had an Ohio Valley record 17 straight shutouts.

He also coached Big Red basketball to a 181-139 record from 1919-39 and also coached the tennis team.

As a high school senior (1911-12), he captained Big Red football, basketball and baseball teams and was a football quarterback. He died in 1978.

Jim Jordan (Chester High School, Class of 1943). A 6-foot-3, 195-pound basketball center, he was selected captain of the 1943 one-class West Virginia All-State team after leading Chester to a 20-4 record. Two of the losses, including the regional tournament, were to 26-1 record state champion Wheeling High.

In five years of college play, Jordan competed for four conference championship teams. Enrolled in the Navy V-12 program at Mount St. Marys (Md.) College, he was the leading scorer in the Mason-Dixon Conference.

He enrolled at the University of North Carolina in the Naval ROTC program and earned second team and first team All-America honors in two seasons with the Tar Heels. The 1946 UNC team finished as NCAA runner-up to Oklahoma A&M. He was the only unanimous choice for All-Southern Conference and led the league in scoring. Featured on a Tar Heel trading card of basketball legends, his jersey No. 8 hangs from the rafters of the Dean Smith Center.

Jordan finished his college career with two season at the University of Kentucky and played on the Wildcats' 1947 NIT title team and the 1948 NCAA championship squad led by fellow OVAC Hall of Famer and All-American, Alex Groza of Martins Ferry. Both Groza and Jordan were later selected to the All-Time Ohio Valley Pre-1950 team by The Intelligencer.

Jordan, who died in 1999, was an attorney in Chester for 35 years.

Casimir Myslinski (Steubenville High School, Class of 1941). In high school, he was a football running back and captain of the 1940 Big Red team, the final one for fellow OVAC Legend honoree Charles (Punque) Cartledge.

He entered West Point in the last pre-World War II class and under the stepped-up wartime program, he graduated in three years with a B.S. in engineering.

He served as captain of the 1943 Army team and earned the Most Valuable Player award while being named to every first team All-America selection as a 6-foot, 195-pound center. He also received the Knute Rockne Award as the nation's outstanding lineman in 1943.

After graduation in 1944, Myslinski entered the Air Force and returned to West Point in administration in 1952. In 1956, he became head of the Physical Education Department at the Air Force Academy and from 1968-82, he served as Athletic Director at the University of Pittsburgh.

He was selected Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Man of the Year in 1977.

Myslinski died in 1993.

Norman "Wild Man" Willey (Pine Grove High School, Class of 1945). He is the Ohio Valley's most prominent product of the old six-man football teams at the smaller enrollment schools.

The 6-foot-2, 225-pound athlete played football, basketball and baseball for the Tornados.

After high school, he enrolled for one year in the U.S. Navy and briefly attended Salem College before enrolling at Marshall College, where he played football and basketball.

A fullback-defensive end in football, he was drafted in the 13th round by the NFL's Philadelphia Eagles, where he played eight seasons from 1950-57. He was a two-time Pro Bowl selection and is a member, along with Reggie White, as a defensive end on the All-Time Eagles' honor roll.

Willey is credited as the reason the NFL started charting defensive sacks after it was reported he was unofficially credited with 17 sacks against New York Giants' quarterback Charley Conerly on Oct. 26, 1952. He earned the nickname "Wild Man" from his pass rushing resulting in opponents' yardage losses.

An inductee into the Marshall and West Virginia State Sports Halls of Fame, he was honored in Pine Grove with a "Norman Willey Day" on Sept. 15, 2006. Signs proclaiming "Home of Wild Man Willey" were erected at the entrance to the town as well as at Valley High School.

LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2012



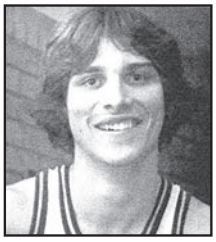
Tony Carna



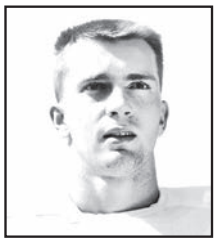
Jim George



Carter Howell



Dave Jones



Kenny Mikes

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Tony Carna (Caldwell High School, Class of 1987). He is one of only four boys to win three Ohio cross country championships and led the start of the most successful team program in state history. He captured individual Class A titles from 1984-86 and had a winning senior time of 15:44.2. The Redskins started a record run of eight straight state team titles, with Carna the main cog in the first two crowns of 1985 and 1986. The 1986 team went unbeaten with a 137-0 mark and was ranked No. 1 in the nation by The Harrier publication, with Carna as an All-American selection.

He was a nine-time All-Ohioan in cross country and track, claiming two Ohio state crowns - the 1,600-meters as a junior and 3,200-meters as a senior. His personal best times were 4:18 at 1,600; 8:38 at 3,000; 9:18 at 3,200; and 15:12 at 5,000 meters. He also set a national meet record in the 5,000-meter run in the 15-16 age group at The Athletics Congress (TAC) Junior Olympics in 1985.

Carna earned a scholarship to the University of Michigan where he won eight varsity letters in track and cross country and was an All-Big Ten and All-America honoree. He led the Wolverines to sixth place in the 1991 NCAA Division I National Cross Country Meet, where he finished 21st in individual competition. He resides in Jersey City, New Jersey.

Jim George (Smithfield High School, Class of 1950). A three-sport Spartan, he was a 190-pound fullback-tackle-end who was selected to the first All-Ohio Associated Press Class B team in 1949 and also was an All-Ohio Class B honorable mention basketball honoree as well as a baseball standout. The two-time All-Eastern Ohio football player led the Spartans to a school record 22-game win streak with a 22-1-1 record from 1947-49 including unbeaten seasons in 1947-48. As a senior, the Spartans opened the season with a 40-6 victory over the Massillon reserve team before playing their regular varsity schedule. He also started for the winning Ohio team in the 1950 Ohio-West Virginia All-Star Game.

In basketball, he led the Spartans to a 22-3 record - second best in school history - and the Jefferson County title.

He accepted a football scholarship to Syracuse University, where he was a three-year letterman and regular for the Orangemen. He became the only Smithfield product drafted by the National Football League when he was selected by the Detroit Lions. He opted to join the Air Force.

Carter Howell (Flushing High School, Class of 1955). The 6-foot-5 center led the Orioles to the two best seasons (43-3 combined record) in school history, including an unbeaten regular season in 1954 and an overall 21-2 mark in 1955. A four-year starter, he scored 905 points - second most in area history at the time - as a senior for a then Ohio Valley record 39.3 points per game norm after sporting a 40.2 average in regular season. He scored 74 points against New Athens -second best in Ohio Valley history at the time - and also had games of 58 and 55 points. In the 118-52 rout of New Athens, he hit 26 of 37 goals and 22 of 30 free throws.

A two-time All-Eastern Ohio selection, he also was honored on the 1955 five-player first team All-Ohio Class B selections by the three major wire services.

The four-year basketball regular ended his career with what was then a Belmont County record 1,961 points including 905 and 513 his last two seasons.

Howell, who also played on the Orioles' six-man football team and baseball team, enrolled at West Virginia State before joining the armed services.

He returned to Flushing where he served as mayor for two years before passing away in 1990.

Dave Jones (Jewett-Scio High School, Class of 1981). The 6-foot-2 basketball guard led the Ohio Valley in scoring his last two seasons with averages of 33.6 and 32.1 points and he scored a Harrison County record 1,885 career points. He had a game high 50 points twice and averaged 12 rebounds a game as a senior.

A two-time first team All-Valley captain, he was Ohio Class A player of the Year and first team All-Ohio as a senior and second team as a junior. His basketball jersey was retired by the school and is displayed in the Scio Museum. In 1982, he was selected to the All-Time Ohio Valley Post-1950 Team by The Intelligencer newspaper.

A three-sport, 11-letter winner, he was an All-Valley selection at end as a junior when he led the "Small Schools" with 51 receptions for 766 yards. In track, he cleared 6-foot-7 as a high jumper.

Jones accepted a basketball scholarship to Ohio State where he was a four-year letterman and one of three seniors featured on the cover of the 1984-85 OSU Media Guide. He was a full-time starter as a senior and part-time regular as a junior.

He resides in Manhattan Beach, Calif.

Ken Mikes (Sistersville High School, Class of 1954). The only Tiger to earn all-state recognition in football, basketball and baseball, he led the 1953 football team to a 10-0-1 record and the first state title (Class B) in school history. Playing for OVAC Hall of Fame coach George Strager, he starred in the 27-12 state title game victory over Romney. He was selected first team Class B All-State as well as co-captain of the All-Valley "Small School" team. He also started for West Virginia's winning team over Ohio in the annual Ohio-West Virginia All-Star Game. He was accorded National All-American High School Team honors.

In basketball, he led the Tigers to a 22-2 record as a senior, the school's best mark at the time, and he scored 582 points for a 23-point average. He had a game high of 44 points against Pine Grove. Mikes was selected the state Player of the Year at the Tri-State Independent Basketball Tournament in Sistersville.

In baseball, he was a pitcher-shortstop and helped the Tigers to their first ever one-class sectional championship.

Recruited by numerous major colleges for football, he enrolled at Purdue and was a three-year letterman and two-year regular as a two-way back and punter. He led The Big Ten in punting as a senior and was fourth in the nation with a 41.2-yard average. He was featured in Sports Illustrated for a major role in Purdue's upset of No. l ranked Michigan State, 20-13 in 1957, and is also featured in a book entitled "The Greatest Moments in Purdue Football History."

Mikes played on the winning (21-20) North team in the North-South Shrine All-Star Game.

He declined offers to try out for NFL teams and served in the armed forces. He resides in Parkersburg.

LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2013



John 'Zip' Behen



Ken Cunningham



Russell 'Tuss' Edwards



Bob Hugh



Joel Jones

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John 'Zip' Behen (Cambridge High School, Class of 1918). The former Bobcat was one of the first 1,000-point scorers in Ohio, and Ohio Valley, hoops history. He finished his four-year high school career with 1,271 points, which still ranks fifth on the all-time Bobcat scoring charts.

In his senior season, Behen rewrote school and Ohio Valley records by scoring 68 points against Woodsfield. The mark remains as the Bobcats' single-game school record and was the standard for Ohio Valley schools until Yorkville's Ken Alessi, a charter member of the OVAC Hall of Fame, broke the record with 70 points in 1949 versus Shadyside.

Behen wound up with 454 points as a senior while leading the Bobcats to a second straight 18-2 record.

As a junior, he scored 386 points. His sophomore total for a 10-10 record team was 302 points. He started his career as a freshman with 129 points for a 16-2 record squad. During his four-year career, the Bobcats posted a combined 62-16 record.

Behen played one season at West Virginia University, lettering as a freshman forward and scoring 123 points for an 8.2 per game average.

In 2007, Cambridge High School retired Behen's jersey number 18.

Ken Cunningham (East Liverpool High School, Class of 1961). A three-sport Potter athlete, he earned All-Ohio honors in basketball and football and was the Ohio High School Basketball Player of the Year selection for 1960-61 by The Associated Press, the only Potter ever accorded the honor. He also was selected to the Scholastic Coach All-American team.

During his prep career, Cunningham became the Potters' all-time leading scorer in basketball, including a school-record 41 points in a game while scoring 439 season points for a 24-point per game average. He also led the Potters in scoring as a sophomore and junior.

In football, he was a quarterback-defensive back and earned All-Ohio and team Most Valuable Player honors in 1960 while also being honored on the All-Eastern Ohio and All-County selections. He also played three baseball seasons for the Potters.

He accepted a basketball scholarship to the 1961 NCAA national champion University of Cincinnati and the Bearcats repeated as titlist in 1962 when he was a freshman. As a sophomore on the varsity, Cincinnati went 26-2 and finished as NCAA runner-up to Loyola-Chicago.

Cunningham led the Bearcats in assists as a junior and the three-year letterman was elected team captain as a senior.

He later returned to Cincinnati as an assistant coach and was head coach at Akron University for three seasons before leaving the coaching ranks. He currently resides in Stow, Ohio.

Russell 'Tuss' Edwards (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1923). He was an honored, record-setting Purple Rider athlete who served as team captain of football, basketball and baseball as a senior. He was an All-Valley halfback as a senior after two years as an All-Valley end. In his senior season, he set record which was listed as an Ohio Valley record for several years. He scored 56 points on eight touchdowns plus eight conversion kicks in an 81-0 blanking of Coshocton.

Edwards enrollod at Washington & Jefferson College, then a "major college" football power under coach John Heisman, for whom the Heisman Trophy is named. He played his final three years as a regular end for coaches Allie Miller and Andy Kerr. As a senior, he was All-East and earned some second team All-America honors.

After rejecting an offer to play pro football with the Philadelphia Yellow Jackets, he returned to the Ohio Valley to coach high school at Adena, Warwood and Linsly. At Adena, his 1927 football team went 10-0, the girls' basketball team was 18-0 and the boys' hoop team had a winning season. He coached OVAC Legends honoree Jim (Monk) Moscrip, a Stanford University All-American who started in three Rose Bowls, at Adena. His 1930 Linsly boys' basketball team took a 21-0 record to Chicago to compete in the National Scholastic Basketball Tournament. The Cadets won two games before bowing in the quarterfinals.

He helped found the Wheeling Midget Baseball League in 1950 and served as president from 1953-68. He was named Wheeling Jaycees' Citizen of the Year in 1956. In 1984, he was inducted into the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Hall of Fame.

Bob Hugh (Scio High School, Class of 1950). The most honored athlete in Scio High history, he set school and Harrison County basketball scoring records which remain six decades later. He was the second Eastern Ohio athlete to twice earn first team, five-player Associated Press All-Ohio Class B honors (the first was one year earlier by OVAC charter Hall of Famer Ken Alessi of Yorkville). He was the second-leading Ohio Class B scorer both his junior and senior years. He scored 744 points in 30 games as a junior, second best in Ohio to Alessi. Hugh scored 1,386 points in 55 games for an average of 25 points during his last two seasons.

The 6-foot-3 forward scored a school, and current Harrison County, record 60 points in a 96-50 win over New Athens. He also scored 50 in an earlier 96-36 rout of New Athens.

In his senior season, he led the Panthers to their best-ever season of 24-1. Scio won its first 24 games, and the Harrison County and sectional tournaments, before bowing to Strasburg in the district. In his four seasons on the varsity, Scio went 88-13 with records of 24-1, 26-4 and a regional tourney berth, 22-5 and 16-3.

Hugh also played on the Scio six-man football team which went unbeaten (9-0) in 1949 and 8-0 in 1947. The four-year record was 26-5-1.

He played freshman basketball at Ohio University.

Joel Jones (Weirton Dunbar High School, Class of 1954). The first graduate of a segregated high school to be honored by the OVAC, he was a three-season football standout for the Raiders before competing in the Big Ten Conference as a member of a nationally-ranked Michigan State University team.

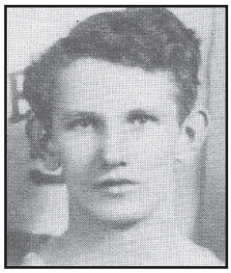
At Dunbar, the 6-foot-1, 215-pound Jones was a fullback for Coach Jim Wares from 1950-53 and served as captain of the once-beaten 1953 teams which defeated the other Ohio Valley segregated school, Lincoln of Wheeling, twice by 28-6 and 19-0. He was the team's leading scorer and ground-gainer his last two seasons and was a multiple-year all-star.

In an era when many college athletic teams were segregated, his talents were noticed by scouts from Penn State, Indiana and West Virginia State, then a national contender in the black college ranks. He enrolled on his own at Michigan State and walked on to the football team. In his four seasons at the school, the Spartans played in two Rose Bowl games including the 17-14 win over UCLA on Jan. 1, 1956 with Jones at defensive end. He lettered two seasons and played guard and tackle in the fall of 1956 when he earned some all-star recognition.

The Spartans were 9-1 in 1955 and 7-2 in 1956 with Jones in the lineup.

After college, he remained in Michigan, where he currently resides, as a high school educator and was a counselor at Henry Ford High School in Detroit.

LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2014



Porter Mackey



Connie Sanford



Andy Tonkovich



John Wood



Bill Young

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Porter Mackey (East Liverpool High School, Class of 1936). In the final year of the jump ball-after-every-goal era, this Potter shooting whiz also noted for his passing finesse was listed by media as leading Ohio preps in scoring.

He tallied 408 points during a senior season when the Potters recorded an 18-3 record. Rules were changed in 1937 to eliminate the center jump after every goal and scoring totals, both for individuals and teams, generally increased with the faster, uninterrupted play.

In the era of low scoring games, the four-year Potter performer set a school career scoring record and reached a game high of 28 points three times during his final season.

He was recognized on local all-star teams, but played before the All-Ohio selections were originated by The Associated Press in 1939.

Mackey, who was among the charter inductees into the East Liverpool High School Sports Hall of Fame, is acclaimed by some Potter historians as the school's finest high school cager. He retired to Peoria, Ariz., and is deceased.

Connie Sanford Richardson (Caldwell High School, Class of 1982). A 10-time, three-sport All-Pioneer Valley Conference honoree regarded as the best all-round female athlete in school history, she capped her basketball career by earning second team UPI All-Ohio Class A honors.

As a senior, she led the Redskins to an 18-4 record and averaged 22.7 points and 13.7 rebounds while shooting 65% from the floor. As a junior, she had norms of 25.2 points and 19.5 rebounds. Her sophomore averages were 17.6 points and 17.3 rebounds. There was no team her freshman year because of gymnasium construction problems. Her career totals were 1,254 points and 855 rebounds with three All-PVC selections plus team MVP honors.

She also was a four-time All-PVC pick in softball and three times in volleyball.

A four-year starter at Heidelberg College, the 5-10 forward led the Ohio Athletic Conference in scoring (20.1) and rebounding (14.2) as a senior and earned first team Kodak All-America honors. A four-time team MVP and three-year co-captain, she was twice All-OAC. She scored 1,691 career points with a school record 1,161 rebounds.

The winningest coach in Otterbein College history, she just completed her 23rd season with a 319-276 record. She resides in Westerville.

Andy Tonkovich (Benwood Union High School, Class of 1940). The 6-1 forward-guard and leading Ironman scorer earned All-Ohio Valley Athletic Association (OVAA) honors and was mentioned on the all-class West Virginia all-state selection before earning college and professional fame. The OVAA was the predecessor to the OVAC.

After high school, he served in the U.S. Armed Forces before enrolling at Marshall in 1944. He played four seasons with the Thundering Herd and graduated in 1948 with a school career record of 1,578 points. He was captain as a junior and second leading scorer of the 32-5 record 1947 team which won the school's only national championship, the NAIB (now NAIA) Tournament in Kansas City, Mo. He earned first team Little All-America honors as a junior and second team as a senior. He has been featured with a full-page photo in the Marshall media guides and was among the charter basketball honorees into the Marshall Athletic Hall of Fame. He also is in the NAIA Hall of Fame..

He became the only Ohio Valley athlete drafted overall No. 1 in the National Basketball Association Draft when the Providence Steamrollers selected him in 1948. He played the 1949 season before returning to the Ohio Valley to be a player-coach with the local professional team, the Wheeling Blues, from 1950-52 in the Tri-State Pro Basketball League. He then served as basketball coach from 1952-54 at St. John Central High School in Bellaire and guided the Irish to a 16-6 record in his first season. He relocated to Florida where he passed away in 2006.

John Wood (Magnolia High School, Class of 1932). This triple-threat football player is the only Blue Eagle athlete selected as captain of the All-West Virginia one-class honor roll picked from 1917-47 before class selections started in 1948. This is comparable to the current Kennedy Award given to the state Player of the Year.

He played quarterback, running back, defensive back, drop-kick placekicker and punter as a 5-11, 165-pound three-year standout. He was shifted from running back as a sophomore and junior to quarterback as a senior and led the Blue Eagles to a 7-3 record while playing mostly larger schools. One of the losses was 14-6 to overall state champion Benwood Union, which selected Wood to its All-Opponent Team.

Wood also was a two-year basketball team captain and a standout tennis player in summer tournaments.

He accepted a football scholarship to the University of Pittsburgh, then a national power which lost only 10 games from 1930-38. He played three seasons, mostly at defensive back, for teams with records of 8-1, 7-1-2 and 8-1-1. In 1936, Pitt upset then-unbeaten Notre Dame, 26-0 as Wood broke the game open with a long interception return. He also played in the 1937 Rose Bowl win over Washington, 21-0.

After graduation, he turned to college coaching/teaching at Harvard and Northeastern before joining the Wesleyan University staff in Middletown, Conn. He was head basketball coach from 1947-68 and also coached football and golf. He passed away in 1970.

Bill Young (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1943). He was a three-sport standout in a Golden Era of Purple Rider sports. He was honored on Ferry teams which won, or shared, two Ohio state championships in 1941.

He was the only sophomore starter on the Lou Groza-led 1941 basketball team which capped a 27-2 record by winning the first Ohio basketball team title-the largest Class A-of any Ohio Valley school. He was named All-Tournament. Later that year, the junior led Ferry to a 10-0 regular season football record and an invitational to play Toledo Libbey for a mythical state title. The teams tied, 14-14. In regular season, Ferry outscored 10 foes by 333-19 including a 54-6 rout of Steubenville.

The rare four-year Rider football letterman and three-year basketball starter on teams with records of 27-2, 22-3 and 24-1, he was team captain in both sports. As a senior on the 24-1 record state semifinalist--the first unbeaten regular season team in school history, he was team MVP on a squad featuring sophomore Alex Groza, an OVAC Hall of Famer and later college All-America and Olympic star.

In 1942, Young became the first Rider to wear football jersey No. 44, a school tradition for several years to the team's top player. He also played baseball.

After graduation, he entered U.S. military service before returning to enroll at West Liberty State. He starred on three teams which lost only one game. He earned Little All-America and Small All-America honors in 1947 when he led the nation in rushing with 1,353 yards. He held the West Virginia Conference career total offense record until the 1970s. He's a charter member of the WLS Athletics Hall of Fame. Young retired to live in Martins Ferry and is deceased.

LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2015



Cathy Clark



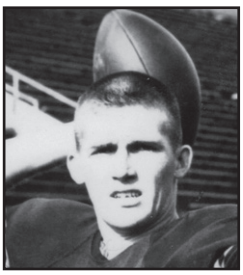
Junior Hart



Brian Hesson



Lou Mott



Jack Thayer

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Cathy Clark Borich (Fort Frye High School, Class of 1986). She is the all-time leading career scorer at one of the area's top roundball programs. The four-year performer scored 1,598 points during a consistent career with 180, 444, 479 and 495 points in each of her seasons. She also charted 430 career rebounds and 265 career assists.

After earning All-Ohio Division III mention as a junior, she was tabbed first team All-Ohio as a senior and was District 12 D-III Player of the Year. She was a three-time All-Pioneer Valley Conference honoree and twice first team All-Eastern District and District 12.

After her senior year, she played in both the Ohio North-South All-Star Game and the District 12 All-Star Game.

The Lady Cadets were 69-32 in her four seasons with four section titles and two Pioneer Valley Conference crowns.

As good as she was in high school, she may have been better in college.

At Marietta College, she not only set the school scoring record but also the all-time Ohio Athletic Conference standard of 2,311 points.

The four-time first team All-OAC honoree was selected a first team NCAA Division III All-American as a senior and was the OAC Player of the Year her final two seasons while serving as Pioneer team captain.

After her senior season, she was accorded the OAC's highest honor, the Clyde Lamb Scholarship, and the Marietta College Betty Cleland Award.

She currently holds six Marietta College records. Besides the career point mark, she set standards for game scoring (42), season scoring (636). career goals (939), career goal attempts (1,918), free throws made in a game (18), season assists (209) and career assists (501).

She has been inducted into three Halls of Fame — Marietta College, Mid-Ohio Valley Sports and the District 12 Basketball Coaches Hall.

Hutchinson (Junior) Hart (Irondale High School, Class of 1944). The 5-foot-8, 160-pounder was a two-sport prep standout in basketball and football for this tiny school in northern Jefferson County.

As a senior, he earned first team, five-player All-Ohio Class B honors in basketball when only two classes (Class A & B) were selected. The Class A first unit included OVAC Hall of Famer Alex Groza of Martins Ferry.

Hart scored 350 points as a senior including several 20-30 point games and also was cited for his defensive play. A highlight was during the Jefferson County Tournament when Irondale upset Yorkville, the defending Ohio Class B champion, by 64-41 as Hart nearly matched the entire Ductillite team with a rare at-the-time 40 points on 16 goals and eight free throws.

In football, Hart was a mercury-heeled running back whose forte was speed.

Hart enrolled at Delaware State University where he competed in football, basketball and track. In 1986, he was inducted into the school's Athletic Hall of Fame.

After college, he served in the U.S. Navy and was a high school teacher/coach for several years in Mound Bayou, Miss., and then taught and coached in Dover, Delaware at William Henry Comprehensive High School (the only black high school in the county) and at Dover High School. He passed away at age 69 on May 21, 1995 at his home in Felton, Delaware.

Irondale became part of the Stanton Local consolidation which is now part of the Edison schools.

Brian Hesson (Caldwell High School, Class of 1993). He was a major cog in the Redskins' running dynasty of the 1980s and 1990s, helping Caldwell win Ohio state cross country championships in 1990, '91 and '91, graduating one year before his school joined the OVAC.

The distance runner captured three state titles in cross country and five in track — two each in the 3,200 meters and 1,600 meters plus one as a member of a 3,200-meter relay unit. All told, he was a 17-time All-Ohion in the two sports.

After placing sixth in the Ohio cross country meet as a freshman, he won the title trifecta with times of 15:35, 15:30 and 15:20 in his final three years.

A four-time All-Ohioan in cross country, he was cited as a three-time prep All-American. He competed in the Foot Locker National Cross Country championships three times, placing 15th, 3rd and 8th. He also was a member of the 1994 Junior National Team.

Recruited to run cross country and track by the University of Alabama, he became a four-letterman in both indoor and outdoor track. He earned All-Southeastern Conference honors three times and competed in three NCAA Track Championships.

He scored in three events in the 1997 SEC Championship Meet — running a 30:24 in the 10K on Friday, a 9:19 in the Steeplechase on Saturday, and 14:31 i the 5K on Sunday. He was honored by the University of Alabama with the Career Achievement Award in 1998.

Hesson has been inducted into the Ohio Track & Cross Country Coaches' Hall of Fame and the Mid-Ohio Valley Sports Hall of Fame.

Lou Mott (Pine Grove High School, Class of 1956). The 5-foot-9 Tornadoes' basketball and baseball performer is considered the school's best-ever prep athlete. After 59 years, he still holds the Wetzel County career scoring record of 2,117 points and the single season point average mark of 33.0 points a game set in his senior year.

His career point total broke the W.Va. state mark of 1,956 points set from 1951-53 by the legendary "Hot Rod" Hundley of Charleston and Mott became the first 2,000 point scorer in Mountain State history. Mott's total also bettered the Ohio Valley standard of 2,077 points set by charter OVAC Hall of Famer Ken Alessi of Yorkville from 1947-49. His career total currently ranks 15th on the all-time W.Va. charts and Top 10 in Ohio Valley annals. Mott held the W.Va. career record until 1958 and the Ohio Valley standard until 1959.

As a prep senior, he scored 693 points in 21 games. In his junior year, he averaged 29.4 points including a school-record 51 points in a 127-58 win over Wallace. The 127 points set a state standard which lasted two weeks before Wheeling outscored Weir, 146-110, at Madison Gym in a game which set a then-national record total of 256 points.

Mott's senior average of 33.0 ranked third in the OV behind OVAC Hall of Famer Henry Josefczyk of Yorkville (42.2) and Legends honoree Jack Thayer of New Cumberland (33.95) and was ahead of two OVAC Hall of Famers — Lee Patrone of Bellaire (32.9) and Ron "Cy" Godfrey of Martins Ferry (32.4). In W.Va., Mott ranked third behind the legendary Jerry West of East Bank (34.3) and Thayer.

As a senior, Mott was selected Class B (smaller of two classes) first team All-State and also picked as the state Player of the Year by the Sistersville-based Tri-State Invitational Tournament.

After his senior year, he was selected to play on a combined W.Va.-Ohio All-Star team to play the Kentucky All-Stars. His teammates included West and Josefczyk.

In baseball, he was a four-year regular pitcher/shortstop and also played American Legion baseball. He also competed in the Wheeling Outdoor Basketball League.

He earned a basketball scholarship to Marshall and played three varsity seasons after a year on the freshman team.

Jack Thayer (New Cumberland High School, Class of 1956). He was a 6-foot-4, 200-pound multi-sport standout (football quarterback, basketball forward, baseball shortstop) who is regarded as the school's top multi-sport athlete.

He earned his most fame in basketball as a senior when he scored 679 points in 20 games for a school-record 33.95 average which ranked No. 2 in both the state and Ohio Valley. The top OV mark was 42.2 by OVAC Hall of Famer Henry Josefczyk of Yorkville and the leading W.Va. average was 34.3 by the legendary Jerry West of East Bank.

Thayer scored 56, 58 and 53 points in three straight late-season wins over Sherrard, Cameron and Follansbee St. Anthony. That gave him a remarkable 167 points in three games and 114 in back-to-back outings. He also had other games of 52, 49, 46 and 41 twice.

In football, he played for W.Va. in the annual W.Va.-Ohio All-Star game and was recruited by West Virginia University as an invited-walk-on candidate.

At WVU, he was one of two regular quarterbacks on a freshman team which won all five games. After his freshman year, he left school to join the U.S. Army and played armed service football before being discharged in 1961.

He signed a free agent contract for a tryout with the Cleveland Browns in 1962, the same year that OVAC charter Hall of Famer John Havlicek was in camp.

After Thayer was cut, he returned to the Ohio Valley and earned a roster spot as a backup quarterback on the first Wheeling Ironmen team which went 9-4 and won the 1962 United Football League title in Thayer's only season on the team.

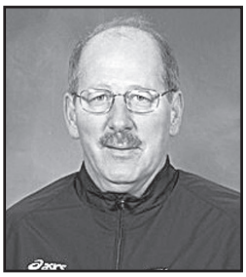
LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2016



Dick Larkins



Amie Marks



Ron Martin



Ray Montgomery



Pete Zinaich

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Dick Larkins (East Liverpool High School, Class of 1927). Hewas a two-sport prep standout before becoming the only Ohio Valley athlete to earn three Ohio State letters in both football and basketball.

In high school, he was a four-year football lineman and served as team captain as a senior when he earned All-County honors. He also played two varsity years of basketball for the Potters.

At Ohio State, he played tackle on three Buckeye teams (1928-30) and also was a guard on the OSU basketball team for three seasons while earning six varsity letters.

After graduation, he served in the Navy before returning to OSU in 1933 to join the athletic and physical educations staffs. In 1946, he became Athletic Director and served until his retirement in 1971. During his tenure, he guided one of the most extensive athletic programs in the Big 10 Conference and the country. The school named a recreation and physical activity facility, Larkins Hall, in his honor.

Amie Marks Cormell (Jewett-Scio High School, Class of 1994). The most honored female athlete in Lady Vikings' history, she earned 12 letters in basketball, track and volleyball.

In basketball, Marks scored 2,319 points in 86 games with season game averages of 26.3, 25.8, 28.5 and 27.9 as a senior. Her career point total ranks No. 2 in Ohio Valley history behind charter OVAC Hall of Famer Stephanie Petho of Bellaire St. John's.

Other career totals include 837 rebounds, 576 assists, 463 steals, 42% field goal and 74% free throw shooting. She cashed 120 of 314 3-point goals.

Marks earned All-Ohio Player of the Year Division IV first team honors as a junior and senior and third team as a freshman and sophomore. She was D-IV Co-Player of the Year as a junior and senior with Ashley Bland of Zanesville Rosecrans and was a four-year Eastern District and District 5 selection and Player or Co-Player of the Year as a junior and senior. She was a three-time first team All-Valley selection and a four-time All-Inter-Valley Conference choice.

In track, she was twice an All-Valley selection. She won the Ohio Division III high jump as a junior and placed fifth as a senior.

Marks earned a basketball scholarship to Akron University where she was a four-year letterman and team co-captain as a senior. The 5-foot-9 forward/guard scored 853 career points, including 16 against nationally No. 1 ranked and two-time national champion Tennessee.

She currently resides in Northfield, Ohio and teaches and coaches at Nordonia High School.

Ron Martin (Tiffin Columbian High School, Class of 1971). The architect of the most dominant cross country program in Ohio Valley and Ohio history, he guided Caldwell from 1975-86 to a dual record of 1,195-186 and the first two of a record eight straight Ohio Class A state titles. In 1983, the Redskins finished two points behind champion McDonald in the state meet. A year later, Caldwell placed second, one point behind Dayton Christian, but the best was yet to come.

In 1985, Martin guided the Redskins to a perfect 136-0 dual record and the school's second state title. The 1986 team, however, is regarded as the school's best with a 137-0 dual record capped by a state record low 26 points to repeat as Ohio champion. The Redskins were declared the mythical national champion by Cross County Magazine. The 1984-86 Caldwell teams were led by three-time Ohio medalist Tony Carna, an OVAC Legends' honoree and one of only five state harriers to win three individual crowns.

Martin left Caldwell after the back-to-back Ohio crowns and was succeeded by current coach Dugan Hill, who extended the Redskins' state title run to eight in a row through 1992.

Martin, who also coached at alma mater Tiffin Columbian and Seneca East, also coached in the collegiate ranks at Tiffin University and Heidelberg University. He was inducted into the Ohio Association of Track and Cross Country Coaches Hall of Fame in 1997.

Ray Montgomery (Warwood High School, Class of 1926). The first Viking all-stater in football and basketball later became and all-time great at the University of Pittsburgh. He earned one-class All-State in football (1925), as well as All-Valley, and was selected to the five-player, one-class All-State (1926) in basketball as he led the second Viking team into the state tournament. He also played baseball.

For his high school, and later college honors, the school featured his All-America recognition with a large pictorial display in the school for many years. That display currently is featured in the OVAC Museum inside WesBanco Arena. In a 1969 series by The Intelligencer, he was selected to the Early Era guards on an All-Time Ohio Valley Football team based on staff research and reader polling.

He enrolled at Pitt on a basketball scholarship and tried out for the football team after national Hall of Fame coach Jock Sutherland reportedly promised him a trip to the Rose Bowl if he made the team. He did and dropped basketball to concentrate on football. In his three seasons, Pitt won 23, lost four, had two ties and made two Rose Bowl trips after unbeaten regular seasons (8-0-1 in 1927 and 9-0 in 1929 when Pitt was crowned national champion by regular season polls.) Pitt, however, lost both Rose Bowls by 7-6 to Stanford and 47-14 to USC.

As a senior, he earned consensus first team All-America as a 6-foot-1, 188-pound guard. The two-way standout, also cited for his defense, was labeled by Sutherland as "the perfect guard" and was hailed as one of the greatest linemen Pitt ever produced. In 1958, he was selected to an All-Time Pitt team.

Pete Zinaich (Weir High, Class of 1943). The most honored player on the first OVAC team to claim an "official" W.Va. all-class football championship. In the pre-playoff era, the W.Va. Sports Writers Association voted the 1942 Red Riders, coached by Hall of Famer Carl Hamill, the state champion despite a 6-3-1 record. Weir was unbeaten (4-0-1) vs. in-state teams with close losses to Massillon and Youngstown Chaney in Ohio and Clairton, Pa. The three-year regular fullback-linebacker on teams unbeaten vs. in-state foes was the Riders' leading rusher as a junior and senior and earned first tam all-class 11-player All-State as a senior.

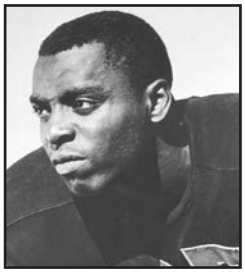
After military service, he enrolled at West Virginia University and became a rare team captain of two sports (football and baseball) as a 1949-50 senior. He lettered four years in football and was a regular as a junior fullback on the 9-3 record team which won the Jan. 1, 1949 Sun Bowl with a 21-12 win over Texas Western. After his senior season, he was drafted by the San Francisco 49ers in the ninth round as the 115th overall NFL pick but opted for an education career. He also was a three-year letterman at shortstop on the WVU baseball team.

After WVU, he spent his entire teaching/coaching career in Eastern Ohio. He was head football and baseball coach at Adena High School from 1956-69. His best football team (1965) went 9-1 and won the OVAC Class A championship.

LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2017



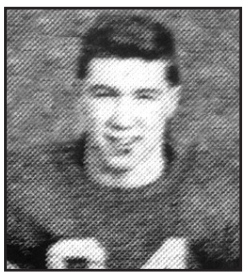
George Cheroke



Frank Gilliam



Harry Diehl



Tom Harp



Ed Oliver

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George Cheroke (Shadyside High School, Class of 1940). He was a football and wrestling standout for the Tigers, which produced the area's first wrestling power under coach Art Kirkland. The four-year grappler won the one-class Ohio heavyweight title in 1940 after capturing the 1939 crown at 165 pounds. As a sophomore, he placed third at 154 pounds.The Tigers placed second to Cleveland John Hay, 21-20, for 1940 team laurels after Shadyside defeated John Hay in a dual meet earlier.

Cheroke, nicknamed Chief, also was a stellar 5-foot-9, 185-pound football guard.The three-year gridder and two-time team captain earned All-Valley honors as a two-way standout. The Tigers went 9-1 and 7-2-1 during his final two seasons.

He enrolled at Ohio State University to compete in both football and wrestling. Playing for coach Paul Brown on 6-1-1 record team, the sophomore moved into starting lineup in fifth game after a teammate's injury. He left OSU before 1942 season to serve in the Air Force during World War II.

After his discharge in 1946, he again opted to play for Paul Brown, who was starting the Cleveland Browns in the first year of the All-American Conference. Cheroke played in 12 games for the 13-2 record Browns, who defeated New York, 14-9 in the championship game. After one season, he re-enlisted in the Army for a 20-year career, retiring in 1965 to enter business in California. He passed away in 1986.

Harry Diehl (Mt. Morris, Pa. High School, Class of 1952). When he joined the Stanton High athletic program in 1960 as head basketball coach and assistant coach, there was no track program, so he guided the 1961 and 1962 basketball teams to unbeaten regular seasons and overall 19-1 and 23-1 records.

In 1963, without a home track, he started the Stanton boys' track program and competed in the Indian League at Mingo. Four years later, the first all-weather track in the Ohio Valley was installed at Stanton and the Indian League moved its meets from the Mingo cinder track to Stanton. Diehl's teams then reeled off 75 consecutive dual meet wins, reportedly an Ohio Valley record, from 1967-76 as Stanton fielded one of the most dominant small school track programs in the area. Other teams in the Indian League included Mingo, Jefferson Union, Toronto, Cadiz, Springfield, United Local and Beaver Local.

Stanton won multiple Ohio district titles, two Class A regional crowns and competed in state events. While no first places were recorded, sophomore sprinter Bob Haught, who signed a University of Alabama football scholarship, posted the state's fastest 440-yard Class A time in 1970 before placing second at the state meet. OVAC Hall of Famer Blaine Rose also competed for Diehl, who ran track and cross country at West Virginia U.

Stanton joined the OVAC in 1981 and Diehl's teams won Class A titles in 1983 and 1986, his final year at the helm.

Diehl also served as an assistant football coach including the 9-0 record 1966 team with head coach Glenn Trout.

Diehl received several awards before retiring in 1986, including the second Robert McKelvey Award from the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dans in 1976 and the Cal Giffin Award from the OVAC in 1993.

He resides in Boynton Beach, Fla.

Frank Gilliam (Steubenville High School, Class of 1952). He, and charter OVAC Legend honoree Calvin Jones, led Big Red to its most successful football-boys' basketball year (1951-52) in history. The court team is the winningest (28-1) in Big Red history with an unbeaten regular season followed by eight post-season wins in Ohio's largest Class A sectional, district and regional tournaments plus wins over Toledo Central Catholic and Akron North in the state event. Big Red bowed to Middletown, 63-53, in the finals. Gilliam was team captain.

The 1951 Big Red football team went 9-1, losing only to Massillon (13-6) and routing Canton McKinley (63-6) before being ranked No. 2 behind Massillon in the final AP state poll.

Gilliam, nicknamed Shag, was a two-way end who earned third team largest class All-Ohio plus All-Eastern Ohio and All-Valley honors. He played in the W.Va.-Ohio All-Star Game.

He lettered three years in basketball and two each in football and baseball. The baseball team went 16-3 his junior year.

The University of Iowa recruited Jones, Gilliam and running back Eddie Vincent and the threesome were called the "Steubenville Trio" by Iowa media. Gilliam was a three-year starter at end including a sophomore season when the Hawkeyes tied Notre Dame, 14-14, and ranked No. 9 nationally. He sat out the 1955 season with a broken leg and returned in 1956 as Iowa went 9-1 to win the Big Ten title and a first-ever trip to the Rose Bowl, beating Oregon State, 35-19. Gilliam was All-Big Ten and second team All-American.

In 1989, for Iowa's 100th football anniversary fete, fans selected Gilliam (and Jones) to an All-Time Iowa team.

Gilliam was drafted in the seventh NFL round by the Green Bay Packers, but opted to follow Jones to the Canadian Football League. He played three seasons at Winnipeg before becoming an assistant coach (1966-70) at Iowa. He then joined the Minnesota Vikings for a 36-year career in scouting and personnel.

He resides in Windermere, Fla.

Tom Harp (Barnesville High School, Class of 1945). A Shamrock football and basketball standout and college athlete who later made his mark in the coaching world.

A four-year quarterback and fullback in football, he was a three-year basketball standout who helped the Shamrocks to won-lost records of 18-4, 16-6 and 16-4 and titles in the East Ohio Athletic League. He was selected All-Conference his last two years.

He was recruited by Hall of Fame coach Sid Gillman to play football at Miami of Ohio and lettered as a freshman fullback before he was drafted into military service for two years with the Navy.

Returning home in 1948, he enrolled at Muskingum College and played quarterback and fullback on two Ohio Athletic Conference title teams in 1949-50.

After graduation, he turned to coaching and became head coach at Carrollton High from 1951-53 with a 20-6-1 record. He became one of over 100 coaches to apply for the vacant Massillon Washington High head coaching job and landed the job vacated by Brilliant native Chuck Mather, who compiled a 57-3 record before opting for University of Kansas job. Harp coached Massillon two years to 17-2-1 record and the state No. 1 and No. 2 rankings by The Associated Press.

He then joined the college ranks as backfield coach at Army before a 15-year stint (1961-77) as head coach at three colleges - Cornell, Duke and Indiana State. The 1958 Army team, led by Heisman Trophy winner Pete Dawkins, was ranked No. 3 in the nation.

Ed Oliver (East Liverpool High School, Class of 1953). Regarded by some veteran Potter observers as the best all-round prep player at the school, he was a statewide honoree on both sides of the ball as a three-year regular. The runner, passer, placekicker, punter, linebacker and defensive back was a first team All-Ohio linebacker pick by The AP as a senior after rating second team All-Ohio defensive back honors as a junior. The UPI selected him a first team All-Ohio offensive back as a senior.

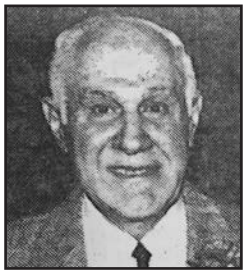
The Potters went 9-0-1 in 1952 and 8-2 in 1951 as Oliver was the team leading rusher and scorer. The program only produced one previous nine-win season.

He was also the leading basketball team scorer as a senior and lettered in baseball.

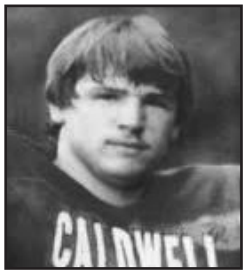
Awarded a football scholarship to the University of Miami (Fla.), he was a three-year letterman at running back. As a senior on an 8-1-1 record team ranked 6th in the national AP Poll, he was second on the team in rushing and scoring.

After graduation, he coached in the high school ranks. He is deceased.

LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2018



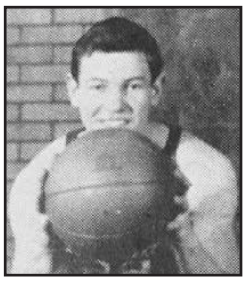
Mac Cara



Dail Harper



Bob Henderson



Eddie Sterling



Kim Tullis

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Dominic (Mac) Cara (Bellaire High School, Class of 1933). An All-Valley end, and four-year multi-sport performer, for the Big Reds, he earned three football letters at North Carolina State and served as 1936 team captain as a senior. He was selected on an All-Time Wolfpack team. All-State, All-Conference, All-South and honorable mention All-America. He was the first Wolfpack to be drafted — in the 19th Round of the 1937 NFL Draft by the Boston Redskins and played two seasons with the Pittsburgh Steelers.

He returned to the Ohio Valley and coached old Powhatan High School to the Ohio Class B state championship in 1940 with a 3-1 finals win over Milford Center after 14-0 and 13-0 tourney wins. From 1940-47. he coached the Steubenville Central football team to a combined 50-17-7 record including marks of 9-0-1, 8-0-1, 8-1 and 8-1. Also, during that period, he coached the Steubenville Pros team for three years.

In 1948, he started a 12-year college assistant coach stint including a year at Georgetown, five years (1949-53) at Mississippi State and six years (1954-59) at the University of Florida. He recruited 37 Ohio Valley players to those schools including OVAC Hall of Famers Joe Fortunato (Mingo) and Don Fleming (Shadyside).

He returned to the Ohio Valley in 1961 and was an assistant coach under head coach Tom Keane from 1962-65 with the Wheeling Ironmen, which won a United Football League title in 1963.

Cara, who was inducted into the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan and Bellaire High Halls of Fame, is deceased.

Dail Harper (Caldwell High School, Class of 1986). A three-sport prep athlete who set shot put records in track and earned all-state honors in football. As a senior trackman, his school record shot put effort of 64-feet, 9-inches at the Fulton Relays in Lancaster was the record for an area weightman for 23 years and ranks second all-time. After a state Class A runner-up finish as a sophomore with a 52-9 1/4 toss, he won two Ohio titles with efforts of 58-7 and 59-2 1/4. He also was a state discus qualifier as a senior.

The three-time Pioneer Valley Conference shot put champion also won the Kiebler International Meet in Chicago and was runner-up at the National Junior Olympics. USA Today selected him as Ohio Track Athlete of the Year for 1986.

In football, he was a four-year letterman/starter at running back and earned three All-Pioneer Valley Conference honors while leading team to two PVC championships. A two-time All-Eastern District pick, he was named Offensive Player of the Year as a senior when he rushed for 1,625 yards and 25 TDs. In Caldwell's first-ever Ohio playoff game, he rushed for 260 yards vs. Crooksville. He ended with 3,486 career rushing yards. Harper was also a three-year starter in basketball.

A Kent State recruit for track, he was a three-year letterman and a two-year Mid-American Conference outdoor champion in the shot put (58-6, 58-9) and an NCAA All-American as a junior when he placed 5th in the national indoors. He ranks 4th all-time in school indoor and 7th all-time in school outdoor shot put.

Bob Henderson (Cambridge High School, Class of 1955). One of the Bobcats' most honored football players, the center-linebacker was a first team All-Ohio selection as a center by both wire service polls and also the first Bobcat to be cited on an All-America team by Scholastic Coach. He also is in rare company by having his uniform No. 24 retired by the school.

The three-time All-Central Ohio League first team honoree helped the Bobcats win back-to-back league titles in 1952 and 1953. He also was a four-year basketball player and All-COL honorable mention choice as a senior and competed two years in baseball.

The 6-foot-1, 205-pound athlete earned a scholarship to the University of Illinois where he was a three-year letterman at center-linebacker. In a 20-13 upset in 1956 of nationally-ranked No. 1 Michigan State, he had an ironman game by playing 58 minutes of the 60-minute contest. Future Pro Football Hall of Famer Ray Nitschke was a fellow linebacker.

After serving armed services duty, he coached the Illinois freshman team for a year with a roster including another future Pro Football Hall of Famer, Dick Butkus. He later coached high school football for 25 years in Illinois. He passed away in 2016.

Eddie Sterling (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1943). The 6-foot-1 forward competed at high levels on the high school, college and professional levels. He earned first team All-Ohio in the largest Class A as a senior Purple Rider while scoring 357 points for an unbeaten regular season team which ended 24-1 including sectional, district and regional titles before bowing to Newark in the Ohio State Tournament. At Ferry, he was a four-year basketball player, three years as a track long jumper and one year in football and baseball.

At West Virginia University, he was a three-year starter on teams with a combined 48-20 record and was team captain as a senior. He scored 559 career points. He later returned to the Ohio Valley where he played fro 1950-52 with the Wheeling Blues of the Tri-State Pro Basketball League.

He also coached basketball from 55-60 at old Cadiz High School where his final five teams went 88-14 after a 4-17 first year start. His 1959 and 1960 Cardinal teams won the OVAC Class A titles and he led teams with won-lost marks of 17-2, 16-3, 19-3, 18-2 and 18-4.

Kim Tullis (Jewett-Scio High School, Class of 1984). The 5-foot-4 guard was the first Ohio Valley girl to break the 2,000-point career mark with 2,072 in 90 games during a four-year starting career. She scored in double figures in 89 games with a single game high of 53 vs. Indian Valley North, the fourth valley player to reach the 50-point mark. She led the valley in scoring two straight years and, as a senior, averaged 27.5 points, 7.5 rebounds, 8.0 assists and 5.4 steals while shooting 46.4% from the floor.

Tullis was a first team all-Ohio selection as a senior and she was a three-time first team All-Valley honoree - named co-captain as a senior. She averaged 25.1 as a junior and was a second team All-Ohio pick and scored 25.2 as a sophomore and gained third team All-Ohio honors. She also was a three-time choice as All-Eastern District and All-District 5.

A resident of Kent, she was a four-year letterwinner at Miami of Ohio and a senior team co-captain while earning All-Mid American Conference Tournament and honorable mention All-MAC her final season. In 110 career games, she scored 940 points with 315 assists and 172 steals. She led her team in assists as a senior.

LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2019



Ed Bartrug



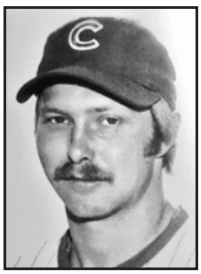
Guido DeVecchis



Stan Goletz



Hank Morus



Steve Swisher

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Ed Bartrug (Magnolia High School, Class of 1927). He was a two-sport (football and basketball) prep and college standout. Bartrug earned all-class All-State and All-Valley honors as a Blue Eagle senior for an unbeaten team which played unbeaten Williamson in an all-class "unofficial" state title game in Huntington. Williamson won, 14-13 on the field but ineligible players were discovered later and the result nullified. The 9-0 record regular season team outscored nine foes 356-20 including seven shutouts. He scored a school record nine touchdowns in one game and returned a pass interception a record 98 yards against Warwood as a junior. As a senior, he was team captain for both football and basketball.

Bartrug was a five-letter winner in football (3) and basketball (2) at West Virginia U. and also competed in baseball and track. A two-way back in football, he is regarded as one of the best punters in school history. He had an 80-yard punt vs. Oregon State in 1927 and a 75-yard punt the following year. In 1928, he starred for the 8-2 record team which beat rival Pitt for the first time in four years, 9-6. He landed a 47-yard pass to set up WVU's only TD in the win. He was selected to the 1930-39 era All-Time Team.

After college, he was head football coach for 23 years at three southern W.Va. high schools — Mount Hope, St. Albans and Charleston — with a coaching record of 129-50-7. He also coached the South to a 28-13 win in 1947 in the annual North-South Game. After retirement from the education field in 1973, he became a high school track and football official. He was one of 10 charter Magnolia Life Achievement honorees for student-athletes and is inducted into both the W. Va. Sports Hall of Fame and WVU Sports Hall of Fame. He died in 1996.

Guido DeVecchis (Weir High School, Class of 1942). The 5-foot-8 sparkplug was one of the most celebrated Red Rider football-basketball athletes in the pre-OVAC era. Playing for OVAC Hall of Fame Legend coach Carl Hamill, he earned all-class All-State in both sports as a junior and senior as well as All-Valley in football, the only All-OV sport honors at the time.

In basketball, he set a school career point record of 1,169 points in four seasons during a low-scoring era. The mark lasted 22 years before broken by OVAC charter Hall of Famer Ron (Fritz) Williams. He averaged 19 points a game as a senior when he was named to the eight-player, all-class All-State team as the Red Riders finished W. Va. Class A runner-up to Fairmont Senior (38-37). He was a repeat all-tournament selection. As a junior, the guard was picked on the second all-class All-State unit as the Red Riders (21-4) won the regional title before beating Woodrow Wilson in the state Class A tourney and bowing to Huntington East.

In football, the running back was a second unit, all-class All-State honoree as a senior when he scored a Rider-best 17 TDs for a 9-1 record team which lost only to Massillon (Ohio), 6-0. In a 32-0 blanking of Clairton, Pa., he returned a punt 95 yards to score. He played on three Rider teams (1939-41) with records of 9-1, 7-2 and 9-2 competing against a top-flight tri-state schedule. He opted to play football at West Virginia U. and lettered on the 1946 Mountaineer team. He died in 1996.

Stan Goletz (Bridgeport High School, Class of 1936). The 6-foot-3, 200-pound Bulldog was a two-sport standout who led his team into state tournaments in both basketball and baseball. Nicknamed "Stash" and "Lefty", the southpaw was a four-year regular first baseman-pitcher in baseball and the top player on the 27-4 record basketball team which advanced to Ohio's largest class tournament semifinals before bowing to eventual champion Newark after defeating Cleveland Holy Name and Bowling Green for OVAC Hall of Fame Legend coach Floyd Baker.

After going 18-3 in regular season play in the old Ohio Valley Athletic Association — the predecessor to the OVAC — the Bulldogs went 9-1 in post-season play to advance the farthest in school history at the time. He was team captain and earned All-State Tournament honors as a guard. Post-season victims included Steubenville, East Liverpool, Shadyside, Toronto and Carrollton. Goletz also starred as a junior on a 20-5 record team.

In baseball, as a senior, he pitched two no-hit, no-run games in one week during the Eastern Ohio regional tournament to advance to the state largest Class A event. The Bulldogs then defeated Toledo Libby, 5-4, in the first round before bowing, 5-4, to Columbus Aquinas in the semifinals.

After high school, he enrolled at Ohio State and played four seasons of baseball while being scout by several pro teams in the pre-draft era. While in college, he played pro baseball as a pitcher during the summers. In 1938, he went 12-5 with Springfield, Ill., and played for Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in 1939. After college, in 1940, he played for three pro teams — Charleston, W.Va., Pine Bluff, Ark., and Oklahoma City, Okla. Playing outfield/pitcher for Oklahoma City in 1941, he hit .300 in 59 games and was 15-10 as a pitcher before being called up by the Chicago White Sox. He played in five games as a pinch-hitter and had three hits in five at bats in the majors. A year later, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and upon release in 1945, he returned to minor league baseball as a pitcher, first baseman, outfielder and manager until the mid-1950s. He died in 1997.

Charles 'Hank' Morus (McKeesport, Pa. High School, Class of 1939). He made his boys basketball coaching mark at old Newport High (1955-68) before the school became part of the current Frontier (1968-81) High in New Matamoras. His first coaching job was in August, Mo. from 1950-55. Overall, his 31-year coaching record was 409-247 with 11 league titles, seven sectional championships and a district crown in 1969. After Frontier joined the OVAC, he guided the Cougars to Class AA titles in 1979 and 1981. He won league Coach of the Year honors six times; won District 12 honors in 1974 plus Eastern District Coach of the Year in 1969 and 1981, the year he coached in the OVAC All-Star game. In 1994, he earned the Earl Haberfield OVAC Basketball Coaches Award.

Besides coaching boys basketball, he served as Athletic Director at Newport from 1960-67 and at Frontier from 1968-81. In his first coaching job — girls basketball — his Missouri teams went 79-29. At Newport, he also coached the baseball team for 12 seasons with a 97-57 mark and four league, three sectional and one district title. The 1964 team advanced to the regional finals.

He graduated from Salem (W.Va.) College where he was captain and co-captain of the basketball and baseball teams and selected as the Outstanding Senior Athlete.

In 1999, he was inducted into the Mid-Ohio Valley Athletic Hall of Fame and the Frontier High School Gymnasium was named the Hank Morus Gymnasium and an annual Hank Morus Athletic Scholarship was started for senior male and female student-athletes. He also is inducted in the Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame and the District 12 charter Basketball Coaches Hall. He died in 1998.

Steve Swisher (Parkersburg South High School, Class of 1969). South's first honoree was a three-sport Patriot all-stater during the first two years of the school who went on to an honored college baseball career before playing nine seasons in the major leagues. He was a sophomore starter at football end for Parkersburg High before South opened its doors and he became the school's first major multi-sport athlete. He also was a shortstop for a state championship Parkersburg Post 15 American Legion team.

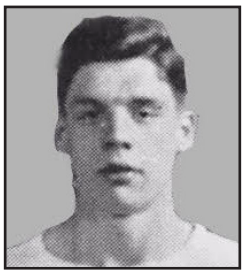
In two years at South, he was an all-class, all-state baseball shortstop, a second team all-stater as a basketball forward; and an all-state mention as a football end. In two seasons of basketball, he scored 1,077 points and converted all 20 free throws in one game with a high point output of 33 points. Baseball was his future, however, as he accepted a scholarship to Ohio University, which advanced to the College World Series in his freshman season. That team featured Baseball Hall of Famer Mike Schmidt. Bobcat coach Bob Wren converted Swisher to catcher and he became a three-time All-Mid American Conference honoree and an All-America selection as a senior.

He became the Bobcats' first Major League draft pick in the first round — and the first from West Virginia — as the 21st overall choice by the Chicago White Sox in 1973. Traded to the crosstown Chicago Cubs, he competed for the National League team from 1974-77 before playing with the St. Louis Cardinals from 1978-80 and the San Diego Padres from 1981-82. He was the Cubs' representative in the 1976 All-Star Game. After his playing days, he became a minor league manager from 1985-93 and 1997 plus 2005 and major league coach. He won three minor league championships in the Cleveland Indians and New York Mets' organizations and was the Mets' bullpen coach from 1994-96. He was a charter inductee into the Mid-Ohio Valley Sports Hall of Fame in 1998.

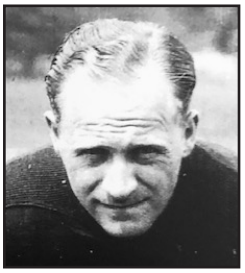
LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2021



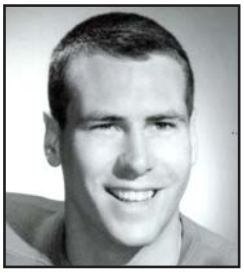
Ed Bode



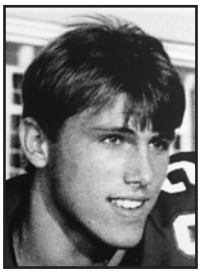
Bob Bowen



Russell 'Bus' LaRue



Bob Lilienthal



Chris Yura

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Ed Bode (Bethel Township High School, Class of 1958). As a junior, he led one of Ohio's smallest high schools to the state Class A semifinals before bowing to Gratis, 73-72. He was selected all-tournament. Playing for OVAC charter Hall of Fame coach Dick Potts, Bethel won county, sectional, district and regional titles en route to a 27-2 record.

The 6-foot-4 center was even better as a senior when Bethel went 22-2 and advanced to the district finals. He not only earned first team All-Ohio Class A by The Associated Press, but was named Class A Player of the Year. He also repeated as All-Eastern Ohio while scoring 537 points in 24 games. He played in the first Ohio North-South All-Star game along with future Ohio State greats John Havlicek of Bridgeport and Jerry Lucas of Middletown.

Bode earned a scholarship to West Virginia University where his three-year career was limited by a knee injury as he earned one letter and played in 43 games.

He then served 23 years as a boys' basketball coach in Ohio with a 325-175 record. He succeeded his prep coach, Potts, at Skyvue where his 1964 team won 21 straight games before bowing in the district finals. After three seasons, he coached one year at Doylestown Chippewa before taking a coaching break for two years. He returned to Skyvue for four years, where a 24-2 team advanced to the regional finals. He coached at Martins Ferry from 1973-78 and ended his career at Strasburg with a nine-year stint. Bethel became part of the Skyvue consolidation which later was in the Monroe Central consolidation.

Bode died in 2010.

Bob Bowen (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1942). He was a state honored two-sport Purple Rider athlete in basketball and tennis before becoming a three-year Ohio State basketball regular on nationally-ranked teams.

The four-year, two-sport standout was a junior starter on a 27-2 record 1941Purple Rider team which won the Ohio Class A championship by finishing with 17 straight wins, capturing sectional and district titles before winning four games in the state event capped by a 37-30 finals' win over Lakewood.

In Bowen's senior season, the Riders hiked the win streak to 33 games before bowing to Steubenville, which also ended a 22-3 record Rider season in the district tournament. Bowen, nicknamed "Frosty", was a second team All-Ohio Class A choice by The Associated Press while teammate Lou Groza earned third team honors.

Ferry started tennis as a prep sport in 1940 and Bowen excelled as he teamed as a senior with junior teammate Ken Kadar to win the area's only Ohio state doubles title in 1942. Ferry's team captured a district crown that year.

Bowen enrolled at Ohio State and became a three-year basketball starter in 1944 and 1946-47. The 1944 and 1946 teams won Big Ten Conference titles and played in the NCAA national tournaments where the Buckeyes placed fourth in 1944 and 3rd in 1946.

Bowen and Kadar were both inducted into the Martins Ferry Athletic Hall of Fame in 2016.

Russell (Bus) LaRue (Wheeling High School, Class of 1926). He was a four-year Wildcat standout in football, basketball and baseball that went on to earn seven letters in two sports at West Virginia University.

In football, he was a do-it-all running back, passer and punter and two-year team captain. In both his junior and senior seasons, he earned first team All-Valley and All-State and twice selected captain. As a senior, he led the Wildcats to an 8-1-1 record and, with no state playoffs and no in-state losses, while outscoring foes by 172-16, the Wildcats claimed an "unofficial" state title. They defeated Parkersburg, Huntington, Fairmont Senior, Clarksburg Victory, Moundsville, Benwood Union and Magnolia.

In basketball, the Wildcats were state one-class runner-up to Huntington in his junior season and he earned second team all-tournament honors. After the state event at Buckhannon, the team competed in the National Tournament in Chicago, which invited all state champions and runners-up.

He enrolled at West Virginia University where he played for coach Ira (Rat) Rodgers and lettered three seasons at fullback. The 1928 team went 8-2. He was also a four-year letterman as a third baseman on the baseball team.

After graduation, he returned to Wheeling as an Ohio County high school and junior high teacher and coach.

He is deceased.

Robert Lilienthal (Cambridge High School, Class of 1953). He earned state honors in football and basketball for the Bobcats. A three-season football starter at quarterback, he led the Bobcats as a senior to its first Central Ohio League championship, and No. 11 state Class A ranking, including a 20-14 win over third-ranked Zanesville, 20-14. He was named second team All-Ohio and first team All-COL. He played for the South team in the annual Ohio North-South game opposite the first team All-Ohio quarterback Len Dawson of Alliance – a future Purdue University and Kansas City Chiefs' standout.

A four-year starter in basketball, he led the Bobcats, as a junior, to the Central Ohio League co-title and earned second team All-COL. In his senior season, the Bobcats recorded the school's first unbeaten regular season and went 23-0 before bowing in the district tournament. He repeated on the All-COL second team and was selected to third team All-Ohio Class A by United Press International.

He enrolled at Ohio State and was in the football program for three years. The 6-foot, 174-pounder was one of seven quarterbacks on the 10-0 record 1954 team which defeated USC, 20-7 in the Rose Bowl and was the national poll champion by the AP. The 1955 team went 7-2 and repeated as Big Ten Conference champion.

The Cambridge resident was inducted into the Cambridge Athletic Hall of Fame in 2018.

Chris Yura (Morgantown High School, Class of 1999). He was a state record-setting running back (102 career TDs, 50 as senior) who earned the Kennedy Award as state all-class Player of the Year as a junior before placing third as a senior behind the only first place tie in history between two other state record-setters - J.R. House of Nitro (passing) and Quincy Wilson of Weir (rushing). A two-time first team Class AAA all-stater, he earned All-America mention from USA Today as a senior.

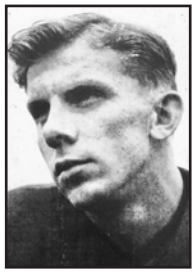
The 5-foot-11, 185-pounder led the state in scoring two straight years and rushed for more than 2,000 yards in both his junior and senior seasons to end with more than 5,700 career yards in three years.

He led the Mohigans to a 12-2 record as a senior and state runner-up to a House-led Nitro in a memorable 69-52 "Super Six" shootout at Wheeling Island Stadium. Yura nursed an ailing ankle and didn't start the game, but was inserted to score his record 50th season TD.

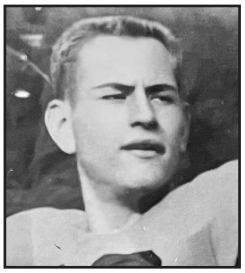
As a junior, Morgantown was unbeaten in regular season but was upset in the playoffs. Yura rushed for 2,017 yards and scored 37 TDs. He was a three-time All-NCAC Conference selection.

Recruited by several Division 1 colleges, he opted for Notre Dame U., where he was a four-year letterman, mostly as a special teams player and backup fullback. The 2000 Irish team went 9-3 and ranked 15th nationally. The 2002 team was 10-3 with a 17th national poll spot.

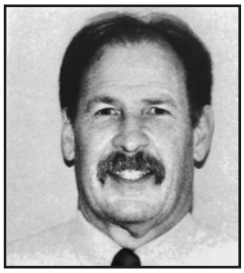
LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2022



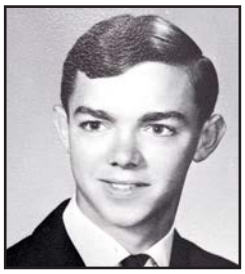
Johnny August



Al Christopher



Allan Collins



Jim Monigold



Julie Wheeler

Legends of OVAC member schools honors those great athletes who played or coached in the Ohio Valley prior to the formation of the conference in 1943 or who played or coached after that date but before their school became a member of the conference.

Johnny August (Shadyside High School, Class of 1940). The 5-10, 160-pounder was a four-year basketball and three-year football regular and star on the 9-1 record Upper Ohio Valley League title team of 1939 which outscored foes, 294-42. The two-way halfback-punter-kicker earned 1st Team All-Valley honors. In basketball, the senior team captain led the team in scoring with 305 points in a low-scoring era and set a school record with 40 points in a 64-46 regular season finale win over Barnesville. He was a three-time All-Section Tournament choice.

He declined a basketball scholarship at Indiana University to play football at Ohio State. After a year on the freshman team, he transferred to the University of Alabama and became a starting tailback as a junior. A top runner, passer and punter, he was labeled by local media as "Triple Threat Johnny August." He was a standout in a 37-21 Orange Bowl victory over Boston College on Jan. 1, 1943.

August then served two years during World War II as a Marine drill instructor at Parris Island, S.C., before returning to Alabama for his senior year in 1945. He was a starting fullback with famed Harry Gilmer at tailback. In the Jan. 1, 1946 Cotton Bowl, the Tide lost to a Texas team led by Bobby Layne and Tom Landry.

He was drafted by the Cleveland Browns in the eighth round as the 70th overall NFL pick. He played one season with the pro Brooklyn Dodgers, but injuries cut short his career. He died in Rome, Ga., in 1998.

Al Christopher (Caldwell High School, Class of 1953). He was an All-Ohio Class A quarterback on the Redskins' 9-0 unbeaten team of 1952. Also, an All-Muskingum Valley League honoree, the three-year starter completed 143 of 288 passes for 1,789 yards in an era of limited passing. He also played prep basketball.

At Ohio University, the 1957 graduate was a four-year kicking specialist on the Bobcats' football team.

A prep football coach at Wyoming High in Cincinnati, he won three conference titles and was head coach of the Ohio Shrine Game and coached in the North-South All-Star Game in Canton. He served as President of the Ohio Coaches Association in 1966.

He went on to Muskingum College as head football coach (1970-80), golf coach (1978-92) and athletic director. He earned Ohio Athletic Conference Coach of Year honors when Muskingum won the 1975 OAC title and led the golf team to an OAC conference title and No. 13 national ranking.

An avid golfer, he won the Zanesville Senior Championship in 1994, 1996 and 1998.

A charter 1998 inductee into the Mid-Ohio Valley Sports Hall of Fame, he also is inducted into the Muskingum University Athletic Hall of Fame.

Allan Collins (Oak Glen High School, Class of 1970). He retired as head girls' basketball coach at Morgantown High as the most successful largest Class AAA pilot in state history. In 24 seasons (1986-2010), he compiled a 488-104 record for an 82.5% winning percentage. His teams won five state titles in 1990, 1992, 1993, 2005 and 2007 and finished runner-up in 1989, 2003 and 2006.

The Mohigans advanced to 15 state tournaments with 20 wins or more in 14 seasons. The unbeaten (27-0) title team of 1992 was ranked No. 23 nationally by USA Today. That squad was led by fellow OVAC Legends' honoree Julie Wheeler, a junior and state all-class Co-Player of the Year who repeated that honor as a senior. Collins also coached two other state Players of the Year in Virginia Tech recruit Stephanie Carter (1990) and Robert Morris recruit Keri Pryor (2005).

Collins coached seven NCAA Division-I recruits among over 20 who earned college scholarships.

He was named state Girls Basketball Coach of the Year twice as well as conference coach of the year and The Dominion Post Coach of the Year honors. He served as coach of numerous all-star teams including the state North-South game, W.Va. vs. Ohio All-Star game and conference all-star classics.

Collins is also a Morgantown High School Athletic Hall of Fame honoree.

Jim Monigold (Conotton Valley High School, Class of 1966). He competed in five sports in one year for the Rockets--baseball, basketball, football, golf and track. He was named All-Eastern Ohio first team in basketball his junior and senior seasons. He went on to Ashland College to play basketball and baseball his freshman and sophomore seasons.

After college, he took over the CV baseball program started by Dave Graham, the son of famed Cleveland Browns' quarterback Otto Graham, and became head coach in 1974, He led the Rockets to district titles in 1977, 1982 and 1988.

In 2000, he was inducted into the Harrison County Sports Hall of Fame and, the following year, he was inducted into the Cy Young Baseball Hall of Fame in Tuscarawas County. He was honored in the Conotton Valley Sports Hall of Fame as an individual and his 1977 baseball team also was inducted.

The new baseball field at the school was named "Jim Monigold Field" in his honor in 2018.

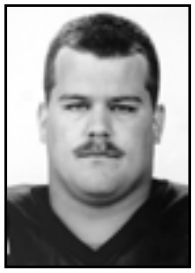
Julie Wheeler (Morgantown High School, Class of 1994)--The most honored girls basketball player in Mohigan history, she earned 1st team Class AAA All-State three seasons and was the sparkplug to the school's back-to-back state titles and a national ranking.

Playing for fellow OVAC Legends honoree, coach Allan Collins, she led the unbeaten (27-0) team to a national No. 23 ranking by USA Today. During her MHS career, she scored 1,612 points in 79 games for a 20.4 average and converted 81% of her free throws. She set a school, and then-state, record with 199 career three-point goals.

She was twice a statewide, all-class major honoree, sharing the Thom Award as Co-Player of the Year as a junior, and repeating as Player of the Year as a senior. She also was the state Gatorade Player of the Year and the USA Today state Player of the Year.

Wheeler accepted a scholarship to Providence College where she played in 101 games as a four-year letterman and starter. The 5-foot-7 guard set the school record with 252 3-point goals and also led the team in assists two years and recorded 343 career assists. She ended with 1,039 points for a 10.2 average.

LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2023



Rich Braham



Mike DeVol



Jedd Gyorko



Cyril Letzelter



Jim Presley

Legends of OVAC member schools honors those great athletes who played or coached in the Ohio Valley prior to the formation of the conference in 1943 or who played or coached after that date but before their school became a member of the conference.

Rich Braham (University High School, Class of 1989). He was a Hawks' football and basketball standout who was honored in the first class of UHS Hall of Fame selections.

In football, the 6-foot-4, 235-pounder was selected first team Class AA All-State defensive lineman as a senior after a second team junior honor at offensive end. He later was named MVP of the annual W.Va. North-South All-Star Game.

In basketball, he was a two-time Class AA second team All-State selection.

A walk-on who earned a West Virginia U. scholarship, he was named team MVP and earned All-America recognition on Kodak, UPI and Associated Press teams after helping WVU to its second unbeaten (11-0) regular season in school history. The All-Big East selection made 37 starts from 1990-93 including every game as a senior captain.

He was inducted into the WVU Sports Hall of Fame in 2007.

Picked in the third round of the 1994 NFL Draft by the Arizona Cardinals before trade that season to the Cincinnati Bengals, he played 13 seasons (146 games, including 142 starts) with the last 98 starts at center after early career at left guard. Injuries forced his retirement.

Mike DeVol (Caldwell High School, Class of 1967). He served as a head football coach for 38 years at four schools including three current OVAC members. The Glenville State graduate had an overall coaching record of 267-125-2 including 155-77-2 in two stints at Caldwell from 1974-93 and 2008-10. He coached eight seasons at Warren Local, five years at Parkersburg South and ended with two seasons (2018-19) at Belpre.

His teams made eight post-season appearances including five W.Va. Class AAA berths for Parkersburg South, including a 2003 state title and 2002 state runner-up plus three post-season berths at Caldwell in Ohio Division V/VI. His 2003 South team went 13-1 with a 26-20 state championship win over Martinsburg. The 2002 South state runner-up team went 12-2.

A multiple Eastern District Coach of the Year, DeVol earlier was inducted into three Halls of Fame – the Mid-Ohio Valley Sports Hall of Fame, Parkersburg South Football Hall of Fame and Caldwell Athletic Hall of Fame.

Jedd Gyorko (University High School, Class of 2007). He was a six-time Hawk all-stater in baseball and basketball who earned 10 All-America baseball honors at West Virginia U. before playing eight major league seasons.

A three-sport prep standout who was inducted in the charter UHS Hall of Fame class of 2018, he was a quarterback-wide receiver in football, a shooting guard in basketball and primarily a baseball shortstop. He also played four years of American Legion summer baseball and helped team win two state titles.

In baseball, he was All-Conference four years and a three-time Class AAA all-stater, twice first team plus second team as a sophomore infielder.

In basketball, the 5-foot-10 guard earned all-state three times--first team as senior, second team as junior and third team as sophomore. His point averages were 18.5, 17.3 and 19.0 per game and he set a school career record for 3-point goals.

At WVU, he was a three-year baseball honoree including Big East Rookie of the Year and Second Team All-American while setting numerous school records. In 2010, he won the Brooks Wallace Award as NCAA Best Shortstop and was second round draft choice of the San Diego Padres after his junior year. In three years, he set school career records for batting average (.404), doubles (73), extra-base hits (113) and tied records for career home runs (35) and season home runs (19). He also set four season school records.

After three minor league seasons, he played eight years (2013-20) in the majors, mostly as a third base starter for the Padres, St. Louis Cardinals, Los Angeles Dodgers and Milwaukee Brewers. He batted .245 with 121 home runs and 370 RBI.

He served as manager of the minor league West Virginia Black Bears in 2021-22.

Cyril Letzelter (Martins Ferry High School, Class of 1925). One of Ferry's most celebrated players in the early era of Purple Rider football, he was regarded as the best fullback in the Ohio Valley and also excelled as a defensive back and punter/placekicker.

During his junior season, he scored 102 of his team's 188 points with 14 touchdowns, three field goals and nine conversions. Team captain as a senior, his all-star accolades included captain of the All-Valley and All-Eastern Ohio teams.

Letzelter went on to play football for former Ferry coach Earl Loucks at Carnegie Tech, then a major program, and is the only Ohio Valley native selected to an All-Time Team at the college now called Carnegie-Mellon University. At Tech, he scored a TD vs. Notre Dame in 1926 at Forbes Field in Pittsburgh in a game regarded as one of the all-time major college upsets. He earned All-America honors in 1928 from the International Board of Football Coaches during the era of legendary coaches Knute Rockne and Glenn (Pop) Warner,

He also played year for Army at West Point before an age eligibility question was posed. He later served as an assistant coach at Army until 1941.

Letzelter was inducted into the Martins Ferry Athletic Hall of Fame in 2016.

Jim Presley (Brilliant High School, Class of 1960). A three-sport, four-year prep standout, the 6-foot-4, 225-pounder is the only Brilliant High athlete to earn first team All-Ohio honors in both football and basketball.

In football, the senior two-way end and fullback earned first team Associated Press All-Ohio Class A as an offensive end, first team All-Ohio Valley 'Small School" as an end; first team All-Eastern Ohio, and first Team All-Eastern District. He was also named Jaycees' All-Ohio and Steubenville area Athlete of the Year by the Herald-Star newspaper. He was a two-time All-Eastern Ohio choice.

Presley helped Brilliant to a second straight 8-1 record season while scoring 15 TDs and 24 conversion runs (11 PAT receptions) for 114 points. He led the Ohio Valley in TD receptions with a then OV record 13 and in reception yards (992) on 43 receptions, high numbers for that era. On defense, he returned a pass interception 100 yards for a TD.

In basketball, he was selected first team Associated Press All-Ohio Class A and first team All-Eastern District. As a junior, he earned honorable mention All-Ohio Class A. He ended his career with a school record 1,564 points, including 540 as a senior, and set a single game mark with 46 points vs. Yorkville.

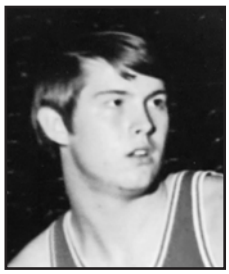
He also competed as a weight man (shot put and discus) on the track team.

Presley was recruited by several colleges and signed with West Virginia U., where he competed as a regular end on the freshman team.

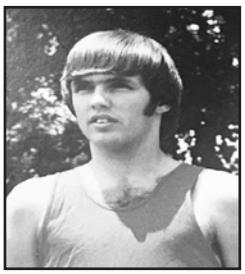
LEGENDS OF OVAC SCHOOLS - 2024



'Bud' Bonar



Mike Carson



Brian Jonard



Rod Oldham



Joe White

Legends of OVAC member schools honors those great athletes who played or coached in the Ohio Valley prior to the formation of the conference in 1943 or who played or coached after that date but before their school became a member of the conference.

Reyman (Bud) Bonar (Bellaire High School, Class of 1927). The 5-foot-8, 170-pound quarterback was an All-Valley honoree as the Big Reds captured Ohio Valley Athletic Association titles two straight years. He also competed in baseball.

He originally committed to Princeton University before enrolling at Georgia Tech and playing freshman football in 1929. He transferred to the University of Notre Dame for his final three seasons and lettered, and started, in 1933 plus 1934. In 1933, he drop-kicked the extra point which led the Irish to a 13-12 upset of previously-unbeaten and top-ranked Army.

Bonar returned to the Ohio Valley and was head football coach at his alma mater from 1949-58. His record of 61-25-7 was the winningest at the school until broken by OVAC Hall of Fame honoree John Magistro. He coached the Big Reds to their first two OVAC titles (Class AA) in 1950 and 1954, including an unbeaten 8-0-1 record in 1950.

He also served as Big Reds' athletic director until his death in 1970. Bonar was one of the four charter inductees in the 1987 Bellaire High Hall of Fame class.

Mike Carson (Sistersville High School, Class of 1969). The 6-foot-7 Tiger basketball center was a four-year prolific scorer and rebounder with school career records in both categories. He finished career with 2,269 points - third best in Ohio Valley history at the time.

A three-time first team Class A All-State honoree, and captain as junior and senior, he also was 1st Team all-class "Big" All-State two years and third team as a sophomore. He also was first team All-Valley "Small School" captain in 1968 and 1969 when the Tigers went 22-3 and 20-4.

As a freshman, he anchored Tigers to sectional and regional titles and a berth in state Class A tournament. He averaged more than 30 points a game in final two seasons and 22.4 rebounds a game as a senior. He set a sophomore Ohio Valley and state record with 54 points vs. Wirt County and also tallied 61 points vs. Wirt as a senior. Carson earned All-America mention from Scholastic Coach, Cage Scope and Basketball Yearbook.

He earned a scholarship to West Virginia U. where he was a starter on the freshman team as the second leading rebounder while averaging 10.9 points. A chronic ankle injury limited his varsity play, including missing one season. He lettered on the 1972 varsity.

Brian Jonard (Caldwell High School, Class of 1977). The four-year letterman in track and cross country won six Ohio Class A state championships for the Redskins. In cross country, he won district qualifiers and state crowns both as a sophomore and senior. His state winning times were 9:59.7 in 1974 and 10:07 in 1976.

In track, the distance runner claimed four Class A state titles after winning district qualifiers. He captured the two-mile state final three times (9:46.4 in 1975, 9:44.8 in 1976 and 9:45.4 as a senior). He also won the state one-mile crown in 4:26.6 as a senior when he single-handedly led the Redskins to a fifth place team finish.

He was inducted in 1998 to the Ohio Track and Cross Country Coaches Association Hall of Fame while in 2019, he was an inductee into the East District Track & Cross Country Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

In college, Jonard was a two-time All-Southern Conference cross country runner as a freshman and sophomore at Marshall University. In his first year, he placed third in the conference meet as the Thundering Herd won the team title. The next year, he was fourth in the conference meet as the Herd was team runner-up. He also lettered in 1980 at Ohio State University.

Rod Oldham (Ripley High School, Class of 1955). The architect of the ultra-successful Parkersburg South wrestling program was the school's first mat coach starting in 1967 and never looked back. He guided the Patriots to their first four state one-class wrestling titles (1975, 1983-84-85) and was named West Virginia Wrestling Coach of the Year four times.

Before his retirement in 1986, he had coached 30 individual state champions including four three-time titlists in Jim Weatherholt, Brad Dornick, Rich Underwood and Darren Moore.

In 2003, he was honored with a "Lifetime Service to Wrestling" award by the West Virginia chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame.

A native of New Martinsville, he graduated from Ripley High School, Glenville State College and did graduate work at both West Virginia U. and Marshall. He is deceased.

Joe White (Magnolia High School, Class of 1943). A three-sport prep athlete in football, basketball and baseball, he excelled in the hoop sport by earning All-State mention three years including second team all-class honors as a senior center. A two-year team co-captain, he led the Blue Eagles to the 1943 largest Class A regional tournament finals where he scored 20 points in a 49-23 loss to eventual state champion Wheeling High. As a senior, he set a school record with a 38-point game (rare in low scoring era), which lasted 15 years until broken by OVAC and West Virginia University Hall of Famer Jim McCormick.

After serving in the U.S. Army from 1943-45, the 6-foot-2, 190-pound forward remained on the West Coast and enrolled at the University of Southern California. He lettered four seasons in basketball and started as a senior while selected as the Most Inspirational Player. His teammates included two National Basketball Hall of Famers--Bill Sharman and Alex Hannum. White's best scoring game was 21 points vs. Stanford.

After college, he served as a long-time basketball coach and athletic director at Allan Hancock Junior College in Santa Maria, Calif. The gymnasium at the now four-year college is named for him as well as the annual fund-raising banquet. White gave Pro Football Hall of Fame coach John Madden his first coaching job.

White was honored in the first class of Magnolia High School Life Achievement Awards. He is deceased.

A look back at past OVAC Hall of Fame Banquets

OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2004



Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2004 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Nancy Mumley (accepting for the late Samuel A. Mumley), Evelyn Kovalick (accepting for the late George Kovalick), Gladys Van Horne (accepting for the late Bill Van Horne), Betty Pokas (accepting for the late Cal Pokas), Jim Foti, Linda Beisel (accepting for the late Richard L. Potts), and Martha Reese (accepting for the late Evan Reese. Second row, Jim Murray (accepting for the late A. Wilson Murray), Ken Alessi, John Havlicek, Bill Mazeroski, Dr. Al Blatnik (accepting for Bobby Douglas), Alan Hornyak and Rayna Williams (accepting for the late Ron 'Fritz' Williams). Third row, Doug Donley, Gerald Spencer (accepting for Tim Spencer), Amy Gamble, Mitch Hannahs, Vicki Pullie-Stokes, Geno Ford and Stephanie Petho.



OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2005

Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2005 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Matt Mumley (accepting for the late Rudy Mumley), Agnes Timmons, Doug Huff, Duke Strager (accepting for the late George Strager), Bob Burton and John 'Corky' Vrotsos. Second row, Chester Grossi, Mary Kay Zitzelsberger (accepting for the late Walter Heil), Mary Schuetz (accepting for the late Alex Groza), June Paull (accepting for Chuck Howley), Dick Miller, Mike Sherwood and Terry Snively. Third row, John 'Fuzzy' Filliez, Lance Mehl, Dee Davis, Brian Swisher, Courtney Redman (accepting for Joey Galloway), and Matt Gaudio.

A look back at past OVAC Hall of Fame Banquets

OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2006

Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2006 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Lou Ann Cawsey (representing Cal Giffin), Ron Mauck, Mike D'Innocente (representing Boyd Nelson), Richard 'Lefty' Hall, Paul 'Bud' Billiard and Dave Pugh (representing Warren Pugh). Second row, Bob Gain, Phil Niekro, John Magistro (representing Lee Patrone), Bob Hummell and Harry Wilson. Third row, Ed Burgy, Bruce Smith, Wendy Baker, Dennis Swearingen, Bill Starr (representing Jeff Snedegar) and Bill West.





OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2007

Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2007 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Donna Joseph, Nick Bedway, Earl Klevins, Sam Andy and Bill Hinegardner; second row, Baci Carpico (representing Joe Fortunato), Rosalie McSwain (representing Don Fleming), John Reger, Bob Kelley, Robert 'Bo' McConnaughy and Brenda Cattane Ballog (representing Gene Cattane); third row, John Leon, Jennifer Hyland Brown, Anthony Reed, Jose Davis and Chris Enochs.

A look back at past OVAC Hall of Fame Banquets

OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2008

Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2008 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Rob and Chip Hedmond (accepting for the late Bob Hedmond), Doug Huff (accepting for the late Jimmy Stewart), Bill Thomas, John Craig and Larry Kettlewell (accepting for the late Bob Kettlewell); second row, Tom Keane (accepting for the late Tom Keane), Nick Mumley, Tom Yakubowski, Bill Kennedy, Bob Rieves and Mike Kovalick; back row, Joseph Pettini (accepting for Joe Pettini), Connie Doutt, Eric Peterson (accepting for Jay Peterson), Mark Cisar and Suzie Dailer.





OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2009

Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2009 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Richard "Dick" Edge, Dr. Vince Monseau, John Sorrenti, Gene Ford, Henry Lazasz and Bill Paolisso; second row, Harold "Doc" Daugherty, Jim Hanna, Ken Jobko (accepting for the late Bill Jobko), Tim Anderson and Mark Thompson; third row, Marty Coyne, Mike Dawson, Charlie Keenan, Tim Moxley, David Bosley and Otis Winston.

A look back at past OVAC Hall of Fame Banquets

OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2010

Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2010 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Rick DeLuca, Frank Baxter, Jean Davies (representing Bill Davies), John Stephenson and Kyle Rose; second row, Tom Cusick (representing Chuck Watt), John "Streaky" Haloszka, Dave Bruney (representing Fred Bruney), Henry Josefczyk, Don Sutherin, Larry Duck; third row, Phil Niekro (representing Joe Niekro), Less Browne, Mike Wright, Melissa Hammond and Jeff Sweitzer.





OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2011

Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2011 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Chuck Petty (accepting for the late Charles E. Petty), Dick Thurnes, Ross Gallabrese (accepting for the late John Kirker), Patty Dei (accepting for the late Dick Dei) and Larry Shaw. Second row, Plennie Clutter, Gary Martin (accepting for the late Edgar Martin), Carol Hudson (accepting for the late Bob Jeter), Jim McCormick, Richard Boron, John Donahue (accepting for the late Randy Donahue). Third row, Craig Miller, Pat Miller, Marsha Clay (accepting for Willie Clay), Sharon Vincent, Reno DiOrio (accepting for T.J. Hannig), Quincy Wilson and Ashley Battle.

A look back at past OVAC Hall of Fame Banquets

OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2012



Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2012 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Tom Bechtel, Phillip Carey (accepting for the late Burdell "Jimmy" Carey), Shawn Donley (accepting for the late Charles "Red" Donley), Gene Ammirante, Gary Sprague and Bill Tonini; second row, Stephanie Joseph Wilson and Aimee Joseph Mayer (accepting for the late Eugene "Eudie" Joseph), Art Hehr, Joey Maroon (accepting for Joe Maroon), Dan Lalich (accepting for Dan Abramowicz) and Amber Ellison; third row, Mark Kerwood (accepting for the late Richard "Dick" Kerwood), Doug Swearingen, Alex Welker, Chris Starr, Shawn Vincent and Kenny Howell.



OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2013

Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2013 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Tom Rataiczak, Tim McCoy, Lori Figurski (accepting for the late Richard 'Hoot' Gibson), Nick Aloi, Dax Thomas (accepting for the late Jim Thomas), John Howell, Don Zinni and Harry 'Moo' Moore. Second row, Fred Burda (accepting for the late Ron 'Cy' Godfrey), Ken Vargo, Ken Campanizzi (accepting for Jim Brown), Larry Marmie, Rhonda Noble, and Peri Powell. Third row, Mark Emmerling, Blaine Rose, Ben Taylor, Bethany Piccolini and Jedidiah Stephen.

A look back at past OVAC Hall of Fame Banquets

OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2014



Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2014 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Rick Coles, Bill Brubaker, James Companion, Jim Potts, Dick Edge (accepting for the late Bob Roe), Jack Prettyman and James 'Junior' Moore. Second row, Gordon Gordon, Stan Boroski, Mike Smith and Chad Brinker. Third row, Eddie Drummond, David Bertolino, Russ Hutchins (accepting for Karrie Hutchins), and Dan Stephens. Also inducted were Paul Richards, Mike Ingram, Jim Kerr and Alan Jack.



OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2015

The Class of 2015 for the OVAC Hall of Fame or their representatives include, front row left to right, Linda Myers, Denny Magruder, Sherri Kellas (accepting for the late George Kellas II), David 'Ty' Fleming' and Rod Johnson. Second row, Dorothy Powell (accepting for the late Duane Powell), Pat Graetjens (accepting for the late Sam 'Buzz' Berry), John Spence (accepting for the late Paul Rickards) and Miles Witchey (accepting for the late Clyde Eads). Third Row, Gene 'Beef' Lamone, Rick Nau, Ed Pastilong and Rudy Jovicic. Four row, Janis Trupovnieks, Kelly Swierkos and James Taylor; Back row, Dr. Dianna Vargo (accepting for Mike McLeod, Brittany Hocker, \Ted Talkington and Paul Hoover.

A look back at past OVAC Hall of Fame Banquets

OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2016



Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2016 or their representatives include, front row left to right, their representatives) included, Bob Koch, John Nese, Lisa Beck (representing the late Jimmy Mountain),Stan Blankenship, Dave Linn and Tom West; second row, Andy Cross, Al Handlan (representing Jay Handlan), Evelyn Kovalick (representing Eddie Becker), Mike Habig (representing Neil Habig, Don Cash (representing Rob Munn), John Wiley (representing Ben Wiley and Jim Wood; back row, Jim Woofter, William Augur (representing Kim Augur), Dave Delande, Jodi Bates Starr, Matt Powell, Zach Amedro and Kacie Vavrek.

OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2017



Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2017 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Arthur "Butch" Joseph, Ross Stoltz, Jeff Harrison, Dave Caldwell, Vicki Leggett (representing Terry Leggett) and Bill Gompers; second row, Lisa Glieber (representing Tom Franckhauser), Angela Hearst (representing William 'Catfish' Hearst), Jarrett Alford (representing Roger Alford), Gary Repella, Chris Jones and Scot Maffe; back row, Jami Bendle, Mike Snively, Jose Davis (representing Nate Davis), April Rotilio and Roger Sowers II (representing Roger Sowers).

A look back at past OVAC Hall of Fame Banquets

OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2018



Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2018 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Ron White, Greg Haberfield (representing Earl Haberfield), John Simonson, Tim Berger (representing Jack Berger), Bob Montgomery, Steve Kish and Bob Plotz; second row, Robert Pritchard, Tammy Sessi Spence (representing Geno Sessi), Geri Johnson-Osby and Cosmo Prolago (representing Don Osby), Willie Tucker (representing Bill Tucker and Keith Vrotsos; back row, Georgia Dawson, Ron Stephens, Eric McGhee, Kelly Shields, Reno Saccoccia (representing Zach Collaros} and Adam Hoppel.

OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2019



The Class of 2019 for the OVAC Hall of Fame or their representatives include, front row left to right, Dr. Dan Doyle, Al Glitch, Don Clegg, Dave Bruney , Jay Circosta, Jim Crosier and Mike Sherwood (representing Chet Daniels); second row, George Deiderich (representing his brother, Art Deiderich), Catherine Knox (representing her father, Pete Gongola), Becky Gala (representing her uncle, Bob DiStefano), Leon Jenkin), Jeff Patterson and Ron Sismondo; back row, Shelly Carroll, Mike Gulan, Jamie Adams, Casey Coyne (representing his brother, Scott Coyne), Tyler Engle and Liz Repella.

A look back at past OVAC Hall of Fame Banquets

OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2021



Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2021 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Jerry Narcisi, Rich Wilinski, Scott Nolte, Kim Clifford, Robert 'Bubba' Kapral and Larry Deaton; second row, Bill Welker, Ralph Anastasio; Keith Bloom (representing Tom Bloom), Pete Abuls and Kate McLane (representing Don 'Kip' McLane); third row, Joe Blaha, Carl Fodor Jr., Daryl 'Boogie' Johnson, Josh Watson, Leekycia Brown and Natalie Perzanowski.

OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2022



Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2022 or their representatives include, front row left to right, Dr. Dianna Vargo, Linda Alexander (representing the late Henry 'Hen' Healy), Seth Staskey, Robert 'Bo' McConnaughy (representing Dave Cisar), and Terry Depew; second row, Mike Coyne, Edmund DiBacco, Roger Holdinsky, Fred Bruney (representing the late Bob Bruney), and Tony 'Gary' Marvin; third row, Richard Summers, Lori Heady, Jeff Woofter, Chris McGhee Sr. (representing Curtis McGhee, Jr.), DJ Duke and Teddi Jo Maslowski.

A look back at past OVAC Hall of Fame Banquets

OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2023

The OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2023 inductees or their representatives include, front row left to right, Kelly Rine, Bob Robinson, Bob Dawson, Penn Kurtz, Don Cash, Dick Reasbeck and Mike Tomasovich; second row, Beth Tomasovich (representing Ted Tomasovich), Brian Doe (representing Steve Doe), Lance LaFollette, Tim McCrate, Shawn Straughn and Jessica Hines; back row, Fred Ray, Sean McCrate (representing Jennie Castle), Koel Davia, Justin Fox and Max Nogay.





OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2024

Members of the OVAC Hall of Fame Class of 2024 inductees or their representatives include, front row left to right, Libby Shepherd, Terry Rataiczak, Kim North, John Magistro, Sue Levi (representing Roger Levi), Bob O'Brien, Keith Sommer; second row, Tom 'Chip' Coulter, Dawnica Young-Kimberly (representing Donnie Young), Scott Barnhouse, Darrell Cheripko, Aric Long, Alex Shriner (representing Lisa Ribble); back row, Rafael Cruz, Ron Sismondo (representing Bobby Sismondo), Ashley Dunigan, Kinsi Tellep, Alexa Abrams, Dan Monteroso.

MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR OVAC HALL OF FAME

1. COACHES:
Cannot be inducted until retired or deceased.
Only win achieved at OVAC schools count in totals.
Wins/titles can be boys/girls combined if in the same sport (track, cross country, etc.)
Baseball: 250 wins.
Basketball: 250 wins
Cheering: 5 OVAC titles
Cross Country: 5 OVAC titles
Football: 125 wins
Golf: 5 OVAC titles
Soccer: 125 wins
Softball: 250 wins
Swimming: 5 OVAC titles
Track: 5 OVAC titles
Volleyball: 250 wins
Wrestling: 5 OVAC Class Tournament titles

Hall of Fame

2. OFFICIALS:
Cannot be inducted until retired or deceased
25 years of service

3. MEDIA:
Can be inducted any time
20 years of service
Contributions to the OVAC

4. OVAC FAMILY:
Executive Board, officers, meet directors, etc.
Contributions to the conference

5. OVAC CONTRIBUTOR:
Individuals who have financially backed the conference as well as those who have been successful in the high school/college/professional ranks but don't meet the criteria in other categories.

6. ATHLETES:
Must be out of high school 10 years
Primary consideration focuses on accomplishments in the OVAC; however, college and professional accomplishments will enhance the athlete's resume.
Baseball: Multiple First Team All-OVAC and/or All-State honors
Basketball: Multiple First Team All-OVAC and/or All-State honors
Cheering: Performance on multiple OVAC and/or State champion teams
Cross Country: Multiple individual OVAC and/or All-State place finishes
Football: Multiple First Team All-OVAC and/or All-State honors
Golf: Multiple individual OVAC and/or All-State place finishes
Soccer: Multiple First Team All-OVAC and/or All-State honors
Softball: Multiple First Team All-OVAC and/or All-State honors
Swimming: Multiple individual OVAC and/or All-State place finishes
Tennis: Multiple individual All-OVAC and/or All-State place finishes
Track: Multiple individual All-OVAC and/or All-State place finishes
Volleyball: Multiple First Team All-OVAC and/or All-State honors
Wrestling: Multiple individual All-OVAC and/or All-State place finishes